



INVISIBLE TO VISIBLE



EDITED BY
SIDDIK RABIYATH

The volume is a compendium of selected papers presented in the International Seminar on 'Women and Development', organized by the Department of Economics, the University of Kerala. The volume would be useful to researchers, academicians, policy-makers and those interested in various issues in women and development.



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**INVISIBLE TO VISIBLE: ROLE
OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

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INVISIBLE TO VISIBLE: ROLE OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

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Siddik Rabiyyath was born on March 15 1983 at Vizhinjam, a historically important fishing hamlet in Thiruvananthapuram, as the youngest child of Rabiyyath Beevi and Abdul Kareem. His schooling was from SV LPS and Venganoor Boys High School and higher studies from University College, University of Kerala, University of Hyderabad and Jawaharlal Nehru University. He joined the Department of Economics, University of Kerala as Assistant Professor in 2013. Currently having additional charges of Director, Department of Student Services (from 2018) and Director, Inter University Centre for Alternative Economics (from 2020), University of Kerala. Numerous national and international journal/popular articles, books and paper presentations are in his credit. The recent books are "Kadalalarude Jeevanavum Athijeevanavum (Life and Livelihood of Marine Fisher folks) 2021", "Navaudaaree karanathinte Parimithikalum Badal Anweshanangalum (Limits of Neoliberalism and a Quest for Alternative) 2022", "Women, Work and Development" 2022, "Women, Education, Leadership and Development" 2022.

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Siddik Rabiyyath

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INTRODUCTION

Gender equity and equality and the empowerment of women and girls are the common driver of academics, feminists, activists, and policymakers committed to genuinely universal human rights. Concrete goals around gender equity have been developed over the past century, moving from the 19th-century battle for political representation, across rights to equitable health services, to the economic equity agenda since the 1950s, to the sexual rights movement of recent decades. While there may be arguments over priorities or sequences, there is a general consensus, among experts and the enlightened public, on the inalienable right to equality – laid out, after all, in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What is less clear is the type of policies required to achieve gender justice, and on this point, most governments prefer to remain vague and uncommitted.

Across all human societies, gender inequality remains immense, affecting women and girls in all countries. Despite conventions on human rights, gender equality, and the specific convention on eradicating discrimination, women continue to face systematic disadvantage, both in the sense of deliberate exclusion from access to assets, for example, and in the sense of persistent attitudes and beliefs that women are weak, or inferior, to men. Gender inequality is manifest in many domains. Women face an economic disadvantage in work in the formal, casual, or informal sector, as well as in the unpaid care economy. There is a significant income and wealth gender gap, and the majority of people in poverty are women (United Nations Citation 2015, 8, 16). Women are also confronted by a lack of power in both the public and the private spheres, and in terms of control of their bodies. In addition, they face marginalisation in political, social, and economic leadership. As a result, outcomes in terms of health, education, income and wealth, and overall well-being, are systemically worse for women and girls in all societies.

The period from 1975 to 1995 was particularly important for a series of milestone global agreements on women's rights, marked by

the four UN World Conferences on Women (namely, Mexico City in 1980; Copenhagen in 1985; Nairobi in 1990; and Beijing in 1995) and others, perhaps most notably the UN Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994. Each of these resulted in a Platform for Action which provided a stimulus to governments and national policymakers, both directly and also indirectly, through the efforts of women's rights movements to hold their governments to account. International law has also provided milestones, notably the agreement of CEDAW (the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) in 1979.

Due to the sustained efforts of women's groups, UN Women and other gender equality champions, a stand-alone Goal 5 on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality was adopted within the SDGs with gender targets included across other goals. This was marked as a great step forward. SDG Goal 5 encompasses a multi-dimensional approach to gender equality with a wide range of targets that include ending discrimination and VAW, including trafficking and sexual (and other types of) exploitation; ending child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation; recognising unpaid care and domestic work; promoting women's participation and opportunities for leadership; ensuring universal access to sexual health and reproductive rights; enabling ownership of land and other property, including natural resources; and providing access to intermediate technology (Stuart & Woodroffe, 2016).

The 17 goals are interconnected, which means that gains in any one area would catalyse achievements in others, with the potential to create greater synergies and impact. Given the limited success that women's movements, networks and groups had in integrating gender and rights issues within the MDGs, they engaged far more extensively in the lead-up processes to the adoption of the SDGs. Among the prominent women's groups and networks engaging with the process were Post-2015 Women's Coalition, Women's Major Group (WMG), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Association of Women in Development (AWID) and Asia Pacific Women's Law and Development, as well as other regional networks. Each of them, independently and collectively, raised concerns throughout the negotiation processes with member states and UN bodies regarding the structural nature of poverty and the neo-liberal macroeconomic framework and their impacts on women and marginalised people.

The Post-2015 Women's Coalition (March 2015) demanded dramatic changes in macroeconomic policies. They called for developing an alternative economic framework that would end the feminisation of poverty and address the multiple burdens of unpaid care and non-care work, disproportionately borne by women and girls around the globe. Among the key outcomes of the organising and critiques by women's groups was the establishment of the High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment by the Secretary-General in January 2016, post the adoption of Agenda 2030.

Despite the economic growth in the country in the past decade or so, the declining workforce participation rates for women have been causing concern. It is well known that women face many barriers to realising their economic rights. They are largely employed in the informal sector which is marked by insecure and precarious work conditions with little or no access to social protection. Rigid gender norms impact their employment opportunities and mobility patterns. Labour markets also provide fewer and low-paid work options for women. Women bear the brunt of time poverty due to unpaid and care work. Gender gaps persist in infrastructure and public services and place enormous pressure on their daily lives, including the poor availability of drinking water, sanitation facilities, fuel, fodder and transport. The UN Global Report on Economic Empowerment and SDGs (United Nations, 2016a) has found that only one in two women (aged 15 years and over) is in paid employment compared to three in four men. That amounts to about 700 million fewer women in paid employment than men (i.e., 1.27 billion women as against 2 billion men). The report also found that women take on about three times more unpaid work than men do and hundreds of millions of women work informally without social and labour protection in law or practice. In India, there are about 120 million women who work informally.

According to the India Census data (2011), there are 149.8 million women workers, of which 121.8 million and 28 million are in rural and urban areas, respectively. Of these 35.9 million work as cultivators, 61.5 as agricultural labourers, 8.5 in the household industry and 43.7 are classified as 'other workers' (GOI, n.d.). Even though India's economy grew at an average of 7 per cent between 2004 and 2011, its female workforce participation fell by seven percentage points, to 24 per cent from 31 per cent (Pande & Troyer, 2016). This then amounts to over 25 million women missing from the labour force. NSS data

shows that while participation rates for women workers are highest in the 34-44 age group, the decline is highest in the age group 25-34 years (ISST, 2014). Pande et al. (2016) noted that if efforts were made to close the gender gap in labour-force participation in India, there would be a 27 per cent net increase in the GDP. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 865 million women in the world have the potential to contribute more fully to their national economies, and 94 per cent (812 million) of them live in emerging and developing economies (ILO, 2016).

Women's movements have been pushing the boundaries to build strategic partnerships with the government and have been advised to use SDG Target 5.5 and demand resources for their work. There is an urgent need for multi-sector approaches and partnerships to advance work on women's rights within the SDG plans. Alliances across civil society, trade unions, academic institutions and international bodies need to be forged more strongly to build effective accountability measures for the implementation of SDGs.

The paper co-authored by **Rupinder Kaur and Surjeet Kaur** titled "Women Participation in Work Force in India" attempts to describe the female workforce participation rate in India. Women are the most important factor in the economic development of a nation. Women's employment leads to the eradication of poverty and the prosperity of her family, society and country. The present paper is based on secondary data sources. It is an attempt to describe the female workforce participation rate in India. The study reveals that the percentage of rural workers was more than urban workers. The male labour force participation was higher than the female labour force participation because of social and cultural reasons. The labour force participation of urban females was higher than that of rural females. The female participation rate was the highest in 2004-05 and the lowest in 2017-18. The gap between male and female participation at work was the highest in 2018 and the lowest in 2021. The employment growth rate of urban females was higher than that of rural females. The study suggests that with more education, and positive gender norms, women can acquire greater skills and their participation in services at higher positions will encourage their participation in the workforce.

The paper "Problems Faced by Female Domestic Workers in Urban Punjab" co-authored by **Ravita and Manpreet Kaur** analyses the problems faced by female domestic workers and suggests policy mea-

tures to improve their conditions. Domestic service is accepted as an important category of livelihood all over the world. It is an important occupation of work among women around the world. Female domestic workers are part of an unorganised workforce. As a part of an unorganised workforce, domestic workers faced many problems like adverse working conditions, exploitation, discrimination, etc. Besides this, they faced many health-related, family-related, and personal problems. The study used primary data to analyse the problems of female domestic workers. These problems are related to their working conditions, wages, health, and family. The study also revealed the awareness level of female domestic workers regarding the Acts and Legislations for their protection, welfare schemes, and NGOs working for their advocacy. In the end, some suggestions are given to improve the conditions of these workers.

In the paper titled “Living and Working Conditions of Dalit Woman Labourers in Rural Punjab-An Empirical Analysis” by **Veerpal Kaur, Dharam Pal and Jyoti**, an attempt has been made to discuss the living and working conditions of Dalit (Scheduled Caste) woman labourers in the rural areas of Punjab. Based on a sample of 927 rural Dalit woman labour households spread over all three geographical regions of Punjab, the present study reveals that the majority of the respondents are living in semi-pucca houses and most of their houses are in dilapidated conditions. Out of 927 respondents, more than half (51.67 per cent) started working as labourers when they were less than 20 years of age. It indicates that the poor economic conditions compel women to start working as labourers at an early age. Out of the total Dalit woman labourers, a very large majority, i.e., 93.42 per cent is not provided with any facility at their workplace. The majority of the Dalit woman labourers, i.e., 61.70 per cent are suffering from one or the other diseases due to unhygienic living conditions and lack of a balanced diet. Around one-fourth, i.e., 24.49 per cent of the respondents complain that they face caste discrimination at the workplace. It is pertinent to note that 5.50 per cent of the respondents face sexual exploitation at the workplace, whereas a large majority of them (70.60) has not given any response on this issue. This may be because of social issues.

The paper titled “Understanding the relationship between Education and Work Participation of females in Kerala” by **Archana S R** attempts to identify the factors that determine the work participation of females in the State. The study also explores how unemployment is

related to the educational achievements of females among demographic characteristics. The role of female education in economic development has recently received considerable attention in the development literature. It creates positive externalities such as a reduction in fertility and population growth rates. The benefits of female education have led many development economists to argue that educating females yield substantial economic benefits and higher economic returns than those that result from comparable expenditures on men. The studies found that age and marital status are the significant factors that determine the employment status of females. The states experienced low female work participation and higher unemployment among educated females. This is one of the drawbacks for the State of Kerala, which ranks first in the Gender Empowerment Index and Human Development Index. In this background, the paper uses the 68th (2011-12) round of the Employment and Unemployment Survey and one round of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (2017-18) of NSO. The paper considers the females in the economically active age group (15 to 59 years). The educational attainment of females shows an increasing trend over the years, especially in higher education. It is found that an increasing educational level leads to an increasing work participation rate and unemployment rate together whereas there is a declining share of females out of the labour force.

The paper co-authored by **K. Suganya and J. Juanita** titled “Alcoholic Home Environments: Repercussions on Adolescent Well-Being” analyse the psychological effects of adolescents in alcoholic home environments and brings out the relationship between the socio-economic status and the psychological aspects of adolescents in an alcoholic home environment. Beyond the existing challenges that a woman faces, alcoholic home environments are a great threat to their development in all spheres of human life. Specifically, adolescent girls who experience the intrapersonal conflict of identity vs. role confusion, are traumatised by the fore-said circumstances during their transition phase which includes rapid changes in several dimensions. Alcohol dependence has serious debilitating impacts on the cognitive and affective domain of the individual and the family members at large. The spectrum of well-being in multiple dimensions is affected based on evidence. With the objective of promoting well-being amid challenging circumstances by offering much-needed social support, this analysis is focused on the psychological trauma of adolescents who grow up in alcoholic home environments. The major objective of the study is to

analyse the physiological, psychological, social and economic domains of the well-being of an adolescent who grows up in an alcoholic home. A focused- group discussion was done among 35 undergraduate students. The discussion created an awareness of the various dimensions of the issues pertaining to alcohol dependence. The snowball technique is adopted to identify the samples. Data collection is done using individual peer interaction ensuring confidentiality and anonymity. The demographic and socio-economic factors that are analysed include age, gender, type of settlement of residence, religion, community, marital status, educational qualification, occupation, monthly income, type of family and house, number of members in the family, family income and expenses, details on savings and loan and asset details. It is evident that 46 per cent of alcoholics spend up to Rs. 5000 every month on alcohol consumption, and 37 per cent between Rs. 5000 and 10000, which is one-fourth of the monthly income. Invariably the majority of the respondents ranked failures in life as the most important reason followed by family problems, peer pressure, social status, financial crisis, passing time and the least important reason is unemployment. Autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance are the 6 dimensions used to determine the psychological well-being of adolescents using Ryff's PWB scale. Economic stability and psychological well-being are the significant factors that promote human development. Based on the analysis, it is inferred that the economic stability of the family with alcoholics and the psychological well-being of the adolescent girls in alcoholic home environments are demanding. A counselling approach is suggested to realise the actualisation of human potential.

The paper by **Harjeet Kaur** titled "Impacts of COVID-19 on Women" discusses the impacts of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable section, i.e., women. The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the world, bringing it to a halt with unprecedented changes in our society and economy. However, the impact has been different for different social groups, with the most vulnerable section, i.e., women and girls, being affected differently. It has widened existing gender inequalities and limited women's opportunities. The objective of the study is to discuss the impacts of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable section, i.e., women. Lockdowns and other mobility restrictions had trapped many women with their abusers, cutting them off from social contact and support networks and leading to an increase in gender-based violence. As women working in the informal sector, they could absorb less eco-

nomic shock. Furthermore, school closures and social distancing policies increased women's unpaid care and domestic load at home. Economic and social instability caused by COVID would also increase the risk of child marriage, female genital mutilation, and human trafficking. Not only this, but women were facing problems like sexual and reproductive health and being pushed back into poverty. Some positive impacts are that businesses are quickly implementing flexible work arrangements, which are likely to continue, and many fathers are now required to take primary responsibility for child care. Women and girls suffer economic, social, and health consequences, ranging from disproportionate job losses to increased gender-based violence, which must be addressed through targeted policy interventions.

The paper on "Breaking down barriers of Racial Oppression and Cultural Marginalization of women in Vikas Khanna's *The Last Color*" by **Parvathi Krishnan U** The study attempts to analyze the situation of widows, transgender and abandoned children in post-independent India, at the threshold of change of the century, to reiterate the notion of feministic oppression led by women in their households or the abandoned ashrams of holy cities, attempting to intervene in the women's movement as a socio-political movement to verbalize their concerns by contributing to the development of the feminist perspective against their exploitation, victimization, marginality and degradation. International surveys agree that the traumatic experiences of women and children are a commonplace occurrence in today's world. Several atrocities committed against children like abuse, abandonment and so on, make it to the headlines daily. Child marriage and widowhood have been prevalent at different points in history, in almost all societies around the world. Though punishable by the law of Child Marriage Prohibition Act of 2006, the practice continues unabated, like even during the pandemic, certain districts in Bengal reported cases of minor marriages. With little to no education, no social security, unaware of their inheritance and property rights children lead much more vulnerable lives as widows. The new status as an outcast stigmatizes and psychologically destroys and fragments their identity. Economic deprivation and poverty, outside the purview of law makes them vulnerable at the hands of those in power, thus systemically excluded from strains of development as well. Vikas Khanna's novel and movie, by the same title, raises some very pertinent questions about these kinds of compartmentalization still plaguing our society at large. The study attempts to analyze the situation of widows, transgender and abandoned children in post

independent India, at the threshold of change of the century, to reiterate the notion of feministic oppression led by women in their households or in the abandoned ashrams of holy cities, attempting to intervene in the women's movement as a socio-political movement to verbalize their concerns by contributing to the development of the feminist perspective against their exploitation, victimization, marginality and degradation. With studies on minor sections of society, gaining prominence, there is a need to acknowledge their struggles and existence by lending a voice to the accounts of these marginalized women.

The volume is a compendium of selected papers presented in the International Seminar on Women and Development by the Department of Economics under the University of Kerala. The author is indebted to the University which facilitated the activities of the department. The volume would be useful to researchers, academicians, policymakers and those interested in various issues in women and development.

Siddik Rabiyyath

1

Women Participation in Work Force in India

Rupinder Kaur & Surjeet Kaur

Introduction

Labour is an important factor amongst the factor of production as it is the one who activates the other resources. The working women ratio is too low in India. This is really very important to work and go out of home where she can earn and can live a life she wants (Dhingra, 2020). Women are most important factor for economic development of a nation. Women employment leads to the eradication of poverty and prosperity of her family, society and a country. Indian women still struggle with the harsh realities of inequalities, exploitation and hostility in work place and household jobs. Women empowerment was the one of the objective in eight Millennium development goals (Padmashree, 2020). The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5-Gender equality was to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The great majority of women workers in India are engaged either in agriculture and traditional rural industries or in service occupations. The work participation rate of urban women is significantly lower than that of rural women and that of literate women lower than that of illiterate women (Nath, 2021).

Women of India were relatively disempowered and they enjoy somewhat lower status than that of men in spite of many efforts undertaken by government. Gender gap exists regarding access to education and employment. Household decision-making power and freedom of movement of women vary considerably with their age, education and employment status. It is found that acceptance of unequal gender norms by women are still prevailing in society (Nayak and Mahanta, 2009). Empowerment of women would mean equipping women to be economically independent, self-reliant, have positive esteem to enable them to face any difficult situation and they should be able to participate in development activities. Empowerment is about change, choice and power. It is a process of change by which individuals and groups with

little or no power gain the power and ability to make choices that affect their lives. Women empowerment is a stage of acquiring power for women in order to understand their rights and to perform her responsibilities towards oneself and others in a most effective way. Women have got equal right and status with men in all walks of life. But gender disabilities and discrimination are found in India even today (Rani, 2021). Women also disproportionately populate in India's informal economy, and are concentrated in low-paid, highly precarious jobs. Many protective provisions have been incorporated in the labor laws for equal opportunity. The purpose of this study is to examine the participation of women in employment activities in India. It is an attempt to describe the female work force participation rate in India.

Research Methodology

The present study relies on secondary data obtained from published sources. It has been collected from various sources like, National Sample Survey reports, annual Periodic Labor Force Survey and census of India.

Results and Discussion

Percentage of Workers to Total population in India

The percentage of population of male and female working in rural and in urban areas since 1991 was given in Table 1. According to census of India, the percentage of rural workers was more than the urban workers. The percentage of female workers was 26.79 per cent in rural areas as compared to urban which was 9.19 per cent in 1991. The percentage of total workers was increased in both the rural as well as urban areas during 1991 to 2001. The percentage of rural workers was increased by 4 per cent and the percentage of urban workers were increased by 2.69 per cent.

Table-1: Percentage of Workers to Total population in India

Year	Person	Rural	Urban	Total
1991	Male	52.58	48.92	51.61
	Female	26.79	9.19	22.27
	Total	40.09	30.16	37.50
2001	Male	52.11	50.6	51.68
	Female	30.79	11.88	25.63
	Total	41.75	32.25	39.10

2011	Male	53.03	53.76	53.26
	Female	30.02	15.44	25.51
	Total	41.83	35.31	39.79
2017-18	Male	51.7	53.0	52.1
	Female	17.5	14.2	16.5
	Total	35.0	33.9	34.7
2019-20	Male	53.78	54.15	53.89
	Female	24.03	16.85	21.85
	Total	39.16	35.91	38.17

Source: 1991, 2001 and 2011 census of India and NSSO 2017-18 Report and NSO-PLFS 2019-20

Note: Worker include both main workers and marginal workers

The percentage of total workers was increased by 3.36 per cent. In 2011, the percentage of total workers and rural workers slightly decreased but the percentage of urban workers was increased by 3.56 per cent. According to NSSO report 2017-18 per cent of total and rural workers was almost half as compared to 2011 and the percentage of urban workers was slightly decreased. The percentage of total workers in 2019-20 was increased as compared to 2017-18.

Ratio of Female to Male Labor Force Participation Rate

The Labor Force Participation Rate measures the number of persons aged 15 years and over who are employed and unemployed but looking for a job divided by the total working age population. Labor force includes persons who were either working (or employed) or those available for work (or unemployed). Some persons in the labor force are abstained from work for various reasons. Subtracting that number from the labor force gives the number of actual workers. These workers are further categorized as persons who are engaged in any activity as self-employed or regular wage/salaried and casual labor. The difference between the labor force and the workforce give the number of unemployed persons. The data for the total labor force participation rate (LFPR) of population age 15 and above and ratio female to male labor force participation rate from 1991 to 2020 is presented in Table 2. The table depicts that labour force participation rate was 58 per cent in 1991 and remained almost constant up to the year 2005. After 2005, the labour force participation rate starts declining. It was 53.5 percent in 2010 and 48.1 per cent in 2019 and 51.10 per cent in 2020. It ob-

serves that social norms, level of education, gender discriminatory practices, and policy measures influence the participation of women in the labor force in India.

Table 2: Labor Force Participation Rate in India

Year	Female	Male	Total	Ratio of Female to Male
1991	33.7	80.4	58	41.9
1994	30.9	84.1	58.1	36.7
2000	30.7	82.8	57.2	37.1
2001	37.7	78.4	58.7	48.1
2005	32.2	82.7	57.8	39
2010	26.2	79.9	53.5	32.7
2012	23.4	79.1	51.6	29.5
2018	20.8	74.6	48	27.9
2019	21.5	74.4	48.1	28.9
2020	26.2	75.8	51.1	34.6

Source: data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.TLFC.ACT.FE.NE.ZS?location=IN

Male labour force participation was higher than the female labour force participation because of social and cultural reasons; females do not prefer to go for work. Even educated women do not continue job after marriage because in laws were not allowed them. The ratio of female to male labor force participation rate was the highest in 2001 which was 48.1 per cent and the lowest (27.9 per cent) in 2018. Many factors like mental and sexual harassment, discrimination at work, no safety of working women while traveling, lack of family support, insufficient maternity leaves, job insecurity and lack of good paying jobs, inadequate sanitation facilities were responsible for low female participation.

Urban and Rural Female Labor Force Participation Rate

The differences in rural urban labour force participation rates are given in Table 3. The table reveals that the labour force participation of urban females was lower than the rural females. The female participation rate was the highest in 2004-05 and the lowest in 2017-18. The

urban female labor force participation rate was increased continuously from 1995-96 to 2004-05 and decreased from 2004-05 to 2009-10, after that it was increased. It was the highest in 2019-20 and the lowest in 1995-96. Rural female labor force participation rate was decreased from 1989-90 to 1997-98 and increased up to 2004-05 after words decreased continuously. It was the highest in 2004-05 and the lowest in 2017-18.

Table 3: Urban and Rural Female Labor Force Participation Rate in India

Year	Urban Female	Rural Female	Total Female
1989-90	14.8	32.2	23.5
1993-94	16.5	33	24.75
1995-95	14.1	31.8	22.95
1995-96	12.8	29.7	21.25
1997	13.7	29.3	21.5
1999-00	14.7	30	22.35
2004-05	17.8	33.3	25.55
2007-08	14.6	29.2	21.9
2009-10	14.6	26.5	20.55
2011-12	15.5	25.3	20.4
2017-18	15.9	18.2	17.05
2018-19	16.1	19.7	17.9
2019-20	18.5	24.7	21.6

Source: NSSO's employment and unemployment survey and periodic labor force survey.

Share of Participation Rate of Females in India

The work force participation rate of male and female was 52 per cent and 22 per cent respectively and gap was 30 per cent in 1991. The share of women workers in 2014 was 29 per cent and increased to 36 per cent in 2021. The share of male workers was 71 per cent in 2014 and it was decreased to 64 per cent in 2021. The gap between male and female participation at work was the highest in 2018 and the lowest in 2021. The government has taken various steps to improve women's par-

ticipation in the workforce and the quality of their employment. Male work participation was higher than female because of social and cultural reasons. The Global Gender Gap Index, 2021 revealed that India ranks 140th of 156 countries, compared to its 98th position in 2006.

Table 4: Share of Participation Rate of Females in India

Year	Male	Female	Gap
1991	52	22	30
2002	52	26	26
2011	53	26	27
2014	71	29	43
2015	70	30	40
2016	68	32	36
2017	71	29	43
2018	77	23	54
2019	75	25	50
2020	77	23	54
2021	64	36	28

Source: Statista 2022, www.economisdiscussionnet/India/labour-India/workforce-participation-in-India/19149.

Growth in Employment

Table 5 shows the employment growth rate in India. The table highlights that the Indian employment growth rate during three decades is not so significant. It is because of population growth rate. The employment growth rate of females was less as compared to males in two decades. The employment growth rate of females was more than males during 2005-2014. The employment growth rate of urban females was higher than the employment growth rate of rural females. This is due to more development in industrial and service sector in urban areas.

Table 5: Growth in Employment Rate (per cent)

Year	Rural			Urban			Rural + Urban		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1986-1995	1.93	1.37	1.73	3.23	3.78	3.34	2.52	1.67	2.06
1995-2005	0.80	0.03	0.51	2.86	1.50	2.58	1.35	0.19	0.98
2005-2014	2.20	3.61	2.71	3.28	5.41	3.71	2.51	3.90	2.95

Source: Based on NSSO Employment & Unemployment Survey Reports

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The above analysis reveals that the percentage of total workers was increased in both the rural as well as urban areas during 1991 to 2001. The percentage of rural workers was increased by 4 per cent and the percentage of urban workers was increased by 2.69 per cent. It observes that social norms, level of education, gender discriminatory practices, and policy measures influence participation of women in the labor force in India. Government has taken various steps to improve women's participation in the work force and quality of their employment. Many protective provisions have been incorporated in the labor laws for equal opportunity. But still, the labour force participation of males was higher than the female labour force participation in all the years. The labour force participation of urban females was higher than the rural females during the study period. Gap between male and female participation at work was the highest in 2018 and the lowest in 2021. The employment growth rate of females was less as compared to males in during 1986 to 2005. The study suggests that with more education, positive gender norms, women can acquire greater skills and their participation in services at higher position will encourage their participation in work force.

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2

Problems Faced by Female Domestic Workers in Urban Punjab

Ravita and Manpreet Kaur

Introduction

Women are very important for the nation because as a homemaker they do the most productive work for the development of the economy. But women's domestic chores remain unpaid, undervalued, and even not considered an occupation by the nation (Thilaka, 2018). They constitute half of the world's population, and women's role in developing the economy and society is no less important than men's (Beri, 2020). As per the census of 2011, women constitute 48.46 percent of the total population in India, out of that only 25.67 percent of the female are workers. Most female workers work in unorganised sectors such as agriculture, domestic, construction, etc. And domestic work is largely considered feminine work. (Sandhya, 2019)

Female domestic workers are the part of unorganised sector, even a neglected group among unorganised workers. As a part of the unorganised workforce, domestic workers faced many problems such as no fixed wages & working hours, insecure employment status, no social security, exploitation, lack of decent work, etc. There is also no written contract between the employer and employee (Tandon, 2012; Augustine and Singhe, 2016). Domestic work is an important category of work worldwide. But this is least protected by labour laws. Because the workplace is employer's home, which makes the work highly personalised and informal (Neetha, 2009).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) broadly defines a domestic worker as "someone who carries out household work in private households in return for wages" (Kundu, 2008). In India, A bill presented in Rajya Sabha entitled 'The Housemaid and Domestic Servants (Conditions of services and Welfare) Bill, 2004 has defined domestic worker as "domestic servant means any person who earns his

livelihood by working in household Chores" and in this bill, a housemaid has defined as "housemaid means a women servant who performs household chores for wages". (GOI, 2004). According to The Punjab Domestic Workers Act (2019) "Domestic worker is a person who provides services of domestic nature in a household".

The number of domestic workers increases day by day. But they remain uncounted labour because of the invisible nature of work. According to ILO 2015 estimates, 67 million domestic workers globally. The number of domestic workers in India according to official estimates is 4.2 million but as per unofficial estimates, the number of domestic workers is more than 50 million. (Beri, 2020) As per the NSSO estimates of 2004-05, domestic workers are 4.75 million, out of that 3.05 million are women domestic workers in urban areas (Neetha, 2009).

Review of Literature

Hamid (2006) discussed the harsh realities of the life of domestic workers. Domestic workers were visible in urban India, but their contribution remained invisible and unrecognised. The law ensured them very limited protection. They did not get minimum wages, social security, paid leaves, etc. The author also mentioned some Bills and Acts in this paper that were formulated by some State legislatures to protect domestic workers.

Kundu (2008) conducted a survey to examine the working conditions and rights of female domestic workers in Kolkata through the stratified random sampling method. The study was a comparison of the working conditions of part-time and full-time domestic workers. It found that middle-aged women predominated in part-time domestic work whereas aged female workers dominated full-time domestic work occupation. The study also found that domestic workers were deprived of minimum wages, overtime payments, public holidays, timely payment of salaries, standard daily working hours, etc.

Neetha (2008) emphasised regulating domestic work. Domestic work is a growing category of female employment, but domestic workers were largely absent from state policy and completely ignored by the public and the state. There was no uniformity in the level of wages, hours of work, number of working days, nature of payment, and other conditions of the work. It revealed from the study that the fragmented nature of the workplace and workers, differential tasks, and multiplicity of employers, were challenges in the way of regulating domestic work.

Neetha and Palariwala (2011) studied the absence of state law in the context of domestic workers in India. The study also discussed some

reasons behind this absence. It stated that law formation for domestic work was difficult because of its heterogeneous nature and non-recognition of the workplace. Moreover, unionism and collective actions were impossible because of the fragmented nature of the workplace. It also showed that domestic workers belonged to the weaker section of society, hence not being able to demand justice.

Dar (2014) attempted to analyse the socio-economic conditions of female domestic workers in Punjab. The survey was conducted in the urban slum of the Sangrur district of the Punjab state. The economic conditions of these workers were analysed based on their monthly and per capita income. These workers get low wages as compared to their marginal productivity. The study suggested that regular and fixed wages, social security benefits, and their registration as a worker improved their condition.

Acharya and Reddy (2014) examined the issues related to migrant women domestic workers in Delhi, who live in slums and faced discrimination based on caste, religion, region, language, and other social identities. These workers strengthened the other women at the cost of their vulnerabilities. The study suggested providing them with welfare measurements and stressed providing them with certified skill development programs.

Sarkar (2015) explored the socio-economic status of domestic workers in urban India. These workers were not getting fixed wages, fixed working hours, paid annual leaves, social security, justice, etc. The study suggested some better working conditions for these workers which included structured wages, definite hours of work, breaks and holidays, etc.

Adin and Singhe (2016) examined the socio-economic conditions of women domestic workers in Mangalore city, Karnataka. The study found that domestic workers belonged to the economically disadvantaged section of society and their conditions were vulnerable. It suggested fixing minimum wages for domestic workers to improve their working conditions.

Augustine and Singh (2016) attempted to study the conditions and problems of female domestic workers in the L.D.A. colony in Lucknow city of Uttar Pradesh, India. The problems of domestic workers were related to their health, wages, security at work, family, etc. The study found that these workers were not aware of any Act or Legislation for the protection of their wages and were not aware of any governmental or non-governmental organisation working for advocacy of female domestic workers.

Rani and Saluja (2017) studied the factors that affected the realisation of the rights of domestic workers in the Punjab state and discussed the various issues related to the employment of domestic workers. The author suggested the urgent need for social policy to protect the rights of domestic workers.

Paul, Murthy, and Datta (2018) examined the working as well as living conditions of women domestic workers in Mumbai. Primary data was collected from 1510 respondents who lived in Mumbai. Most of these workers were engaged in cleaning and washing tasks, and very few of them were engaged in cooking and care work

Beri (2020) studied the social and economic conditions and problems of female domestic workers in India. Domestic workers lived in terrible conditions. Various factors were responsible for their pathetic conditions such as gender discrimination, poverty, lack of basic knowledge, ignorance of the government, and inadequate laws. The author recommended a collective program to improve their conditions and emphasised creating a comprehensive social security system for domestic workers.

Objectives and Methodology

The objectives of the study are to analysis the problems faced by female domestic workers and to suggest policy measures to improve their conditions. For the present study, primary data is collected from 150 female domestic workers in the urban area of Punjab. Initially, Fatehgarh Sahib district of Punjab state has been selected. After that Sirhind city has been selected. Sirhind city has 23 wards, from which 3 wards have been selected based on the domestic workers' population in these wards. Data is directly collected from 50 workers from each selected ward with the help of a structured interview schedule.

Results and Discussions

Domestic workers faced many work-related problems such as low wages, long working hours, no weekly rest, no social security, and poor working conditions(Kodandarama, 2018; Kundu, 2008). They fear their employer will terminate them if they ask for higher wages. Also, their abundant availability keeps wages low. So, they remain underpaid. (Kodandarama, 2018) Moreover, domestic workers' employment status is not secured as there is no legal or written contract between the employer and employee. (Kundu, 2007).

Table1: Work-related Problems faced by Female Domestic Workers

Working Problems	Yes	No	Total
No fixed working hours	134 (89.33)	16 (10.67)	150 (100.00)
Get overtime payment	53 (35.33)	97 (64.67)	150 (100.00)
A written contract with any employer	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Fixed weekly holidays	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Deduction of money from wages	25 (16.67)	125 (83.33)	150 (100.00)
No social security	143 (95.33)	7 (4.67)	150 (100.00)
Caste discrimination at the workplace	10 (6.67)	140 (93.33)	150 (100.00)
Receive any notice before removing from work	15 (10.00)	135 (90.00)	150 (100.00)
Allowed access to a toilet in employers' homes	55 (36.67)	95 (63.33)	150 (100.00)
Ever faced any harassment at workplace	32 (21.33)	118 (78.67)	150 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Note: The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

Table 1 shows the problems work-related faced by female domestic workers in urban Punjab. The majority of workers have no fixed working hours i.e. 89.33 per cent. Only 35.33 per cent workers get overtime payment. All the workers neither have a written contract with any employer nor enjoyed the fixed weekly holiday. They have to work all seven days a week. But according to The Domestic Workers Act of 2019, the employer should provide the decent working conditions to domestic worker and addition to that issue a letter of employment which clearly shows the nature of work and wages. Moreover, no extra work should be assigned to them besides the work mention in the contract letter without their will and extra remuneration. Out of the total work-

ers, 16.67 per cent experienced deduction of money from wages. The money is deducted from their wages in case of loss of property of employer or in case of absence from work. Most of the workers do not get any social security. Out of the total workers, 95.33 per cent workers get no social security. 6.70 per cent workers faced caste discrimination in the workplace. Most of the workers i.e. 90.00 per cent get no termination notice. 63.33 per cent workers are not allowed to access the toilet at the workplace. Most of the workers i.e. 78.67 per cent not faced any harassment at the workplace.

Table 2: Personal Problems faced by Female Domestic Workers

Problems	Yes	No	Total
Little time for children	83 (55.33)	67 (44.67)	150 (100.00)
Not able to attend relative's function	99 (66.00)	51 (34.00)	150 (100.00)
Work on festivals and public holidays	150 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Note: The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

Table 2 highlights the personal problems faced by female domestic workers in urban Punjab. Out of the total sampled female domestic workers, 55.33 per cent workers admit that they have little time for their children and 66.00 per cent workers are not able to attend their relatives' functions due to paid domestic work. The field survey shows that they get little time for their children and family because of the double burden of household chores at the workplace and at their own house. Almost all the workers have to work on festivals and public holidays.

Domestic workers are prone to health problems due to occupational health hazards. Continuously to do working with water and chemicals affected the health of domestic workers. Moreover, restlessness also creates many problems. (Sandhya, 2019).

Table 3: Health Related Issues Faced by Female Domestic Workers

Health Problems	No. of Workers	Percentage
Pain*	27	18.00
Allergy	2	1.33
Weakness and tiredness	16	10.67
Multiple problems faced	10	6.67
No problem	76	50.66
Other**	19	12.66
Total	150	100.00

* Includes back pain, body pain, joint pain, headache etc.

** Includes heart problems, surgery, blood pressure, diabetes, etc.

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 3 highlights the problems related to the health of female domestic workers. The data reveals that 50.66 women workers have no health-related problems. While 18.00 per cent workers have experienced pain (either in the body, back, neck, joint, or head); 10.67 per cent workers feel tiredness and weakness due to heavy workload or old age. 12.66 per cent workers have other health problems such as heart problems, surgery, blood pressure, diabetes, etc. While 6.67 per cent of the workers replied with multiple responses as they bear multiple health issues. 1.33 per cent workers have the problem of allergy, as they are regularly exposed to toxic chemicals.

Table 4: Awareness Level of Women regarding Legal entitlements and Rights

Description	Yes	No	Total
Is there any union of domestic workers	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Are you a member of any union	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Awareness of any Act / Legislation for the protection of workers	38 (25.33)	112 (74.66)	150 (100.00)

Awareness of any Act / Legislation for the protection of domestic workers	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Awareness of any Scheme / Program for the welfare of workers	45 (30.00)	105 (70.00)	150 (100.00)
Awareness of any Scheme / Program for the welfare of domestic workers	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)
Awareness about any NGO working for advocacy of female domestic workers	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Note: The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

Awareness level of female domestic workers regarding entitlements and legal rights is presented in the Table 4. It is clear from the field survey that there is no Union of domestic workers in the area. Hence, no worker is a member of any union. Only 25.33 per cent workers are aware of the Act and Legislation for the protection of the workers, but they were not aware of any act of legislation for the protection of female domestic workers. 30 per cent workers are aware of schemes and programs for the welfare of workers. There is not a single NGO working for the welfare of female domestic workers.

Table 5: Domestic Violence faced by Female Domestic Workers

Description	Yes	No	Total
Does your husband drink alcohol	90 (60.00)	60 (40.00)	150 (100.00)
Do you give money for his drink	46 (30.67)	104 (69.33)	150 (100.00)
Face any type of domestic violence	93 (62.00)	57 (38.00)	150 (100.00)
Seek police protection in case of domestic violence	0 (0.00)	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Note: The figures given in parentheses denote the percentages.

Table 5 represents the domestic violence faced by female domestic workers. Most women workers admit that their husband drinks alcohol. 60.00 per cent women workers admit that their husband drinks alcohol, while 30.66 per cent women give money for their drinks. 62.00 per cent women workers faced domestic violence in their homes. But, none of them seek police protection in the case of domestic violence.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

Female domestic workers faced many problems related to their work. There are no fixed working hours and overtime payments in domestic work. And there is no proper relationship between employee and employer. There is an immense need to regulate this work. To reduce the problems of female domestic workers, the state government should make laws for domestic workers and effectively implement them. There is an urgent need to properly implement and ratify the ILO convention of 2011 to give them decent work life. Female domestic workers also faced some personal problems such as little time for children and family functions due to heavy workload. They bear the double burden of work at home and workplace. Their working hours should be fixed and there is a provision for a fixed weekly holiday. So that they can get time to spend time with their family and able to attend relatives' functions.

They faced many health-related problems. Some of the problems are due to their occupational hazards because of the regular use of chemicals, detergents, pesticides, etc. Health affects their work efficiency. So, health facilities should be given to them at a lower rate. These workers are not much aware of the legal entitlement and rights for the protection of workers. Awareness should be created among domestic workers about their rights. They should be educated about their rights. There is an immense need to make appropriate laws to ensure fair working conditions for this marginalised section of society. Government and non-government organisations come up with increasing the level of awareness among female domestic workers. The study has found that more than half the respondent's husbands drink alcohol. So, there is a need to start Drug Counselling Centre in the area.

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3

Living and Working Conditions of Dalit Woman Labourers in Rural Punjab- An Empirical Analysis

Veerpal Kaur, Dharam Pal, and Jyoti

Introduction

The Indian society is economically imbalanced and caste system has very strong manner on it. Historically, all the sections of the Indian Society did not get an equal chance to develop because opportunities remained limited to some selected sections (Singh et al, 1998). Dalit woman labourers are one of the most neglected sections in the Indian rural makeup. They, since ages, have been the victims of socio-economic exploitation and consigned to inferior trades, low income generating occupations, unhygienic environment and contaminated amateurish occupations. Although the untouchability practices are decaying in many parts of the country, yet the caste rigidities continue to confine many Dalit labourers in undignified occupations that place them at a disadvantage when compared to the other communities (Reddy, 2008). A number of researchers have investigated and commented upon the social status of woman labourers in India. Majority of woman labourers are illiterate, unskilled, married and have larger families, which force them to work in the unorganized sector without reasonable wages and occupational amenities. Socially, a large number of woman labourers belong to Scheduled Castes (Dalit) and Scheduled Tribes (Rani, 2011; Singh and Singh, 2009; GoI, 2008; Mishra, 2008; Rajasekhar et al., 2007; Balakrishnan, 2005; Raja, 2002; Sandhu, 2002; Tuteja, 2000).

Dalit women are positioned at the very bottom of caste, class and gender hierarchies. They suffer multiple forms of discrimination – as Dalits, as poor, and as women. The caste system declares Dalit women to be basically impure and ‘untouchable’, which sanctions social exclusion and exploitation. The vast majority of Dalit women are impoverished; they are landless wage labourers; and they lack access to basic resources (Navsarjan Trust, 2013). The rural woman workers have a tendency to suffer far more than men on account of low social status

due to their poor earning capacity in most societies of the world (Sandhu and Garg, 2012). In India, the amount of drudgery per day of work was higher in women than men (Haffis et al., 2005). In rural areas, women are more likely to be employed in the agricultural sector (Lanjouw and Shariff, 2004). An attempt has been made to discuss the living and working conditions of Dalit woman labourers in the rural areas of Punjab in this research paper.

Methodology

The present study based on multi-stage systematic random sampling technique is related to the year 2016-17. For the purpose of present study, four districts were selected from the three geographical regions of Punjab, viz. Majha, Doaba, and Malwa. Amritsar district was selected from the Majha region; Jalandhar district from the Doaba region; whereas two districts, viz. Mansa and Fatehgarh Sahib, were selected from the Malwa region. At the next stage, one village from each development block of the selected districts was chosen on the basis of random sampling technique. From these villages, 927 Dalit woman labour households were randomly selected and investigated by taking 20 per cent households from the total number of Dalit woman labour households. Out of these 927 respondent households, 340 households belonged to Malwa, 243 to Doaba and 314 to Majha. The required primary data were collected from the sampled households through the well prepared questionnaire. The results were analysed by using the mean values and percentages.

Results and Discussion

Housing Conditions

The living conditions of the Dalit woman labourers in the rural areas of Punjab are quite pathetic (Table 1). The houses they are living in are in pitiable conditions; and there is not even proper provision of drinking water which exposes them to many health hazards. A large majority of the respondents, i.e., 91.80 per cent live in semi-pucca houses, whereas only 5.83 per cent live in pucca houses. It is pertinent to note that 2.37 per cent of the respondents have katcha houses to live in.

Table 1: Housing Conditions of Dalit Woman Labourers

Particulars	Dalit Woman Labourers	
	Number	Percentages
a) Type of house		
Katcha	22	2.37
Semi- pucca	851	91.80
Pucca	54	5.83
Total	927	100.00
b) Condition of house		
Good	12	1.29
Moderate	179	19.31
Dilapidated	736	79.40
Total	927	100.00
c) Status of kitchen in dwelling house		
Yes	283	30.53
No	644	69.47
Total	927	100.00
d) Average number of rooms available	1.76	
e) Families having access to bathroom/toilet	775	83.60
f) Condition of bathroom/toilet		
Good	9	0.97
Moderate	106	11.43
Dilapidated	812	87.59
Total	927	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17

The table reveals that majority of the respondents, i.e., 79.40 per cent are living in dilapidated housing conditions, while in the case of 19.31 per cent of the respondents, their houses are in a moderate con-

dition. Only a small proportion of the respondents, i.e., 1.29 per cent have relatively better houses to live in. The table clearly reflects that the Dalit woman labourers are living in pitiable conditions due to their economic compulsions. The field survey has brought out a disturbing fact that the Dalit woman labourers find it hard to even get their houses repaired.

The table further shows that 69.47 per cent of the total Dalit woman labour households have no separate kitchen in their houses. On an average, only 1.76 rooms are available per woman labour household. Out of the total 927 respondents, 83.60 per cent have access to bathroom/toilet. However, the bathrooms/toilets used by them are not proper in any respect. Dalit labourers lack the resources to build these. Even though the state government gives grant to promote rural toilet construction, most Dalits who lack even a pucca house to live in, cannot afford to spend rupees on a toilet. The condition of the bathroom/toilet is extremely bad in the case of 87.59 per cent of the Dalit woman labour households. Only 11.43 per cent of the respondents have bathrooms/toilets in moderate condition, whereas a small proportion of the respondents, i.e., 0.97 per cent have bathrooms/toilets in a relatively good condition.

Age of Opting Work as a Labourer

Most of the Indian women by and large undertake productive work only under economic compulsion. This is the reason for high female participation rates in economically underprivileged communities. The poor economic conditions compel the women to start work as labourers at their early age. It also spoils their childhood. Table 2 reveals that out of 927 respondents, more than half (51.67 per cent) started working as labourers when they were less than 20 years of age.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents according to Age of opting to Work as Labourers

Age-group	Dalit Woman Labourers	
	Number	Percentages
Less than 20	479	51.67
20-30	381	41.10
30-40	46	4.96
40-50	18	1.94
50 and above	3	0.32
Total	927	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17

More than four out of ten respondents (41.10 per cent) started their labour work between the age group of 20 to 30 years. A very small proportion of the respondents, i.e., 4.96 and 1.94 per cent started working as labourers when they were in the age group of 30 to 40 years, and 40 to 50 years, respectively. Even 0.32 per cent of the respondents began to work as labourers when they were 50 years old or above it.

Facilities at Workplace

There is no doubt that the basic facilities such as the arrangement of toilet, canteen, first-aid and other facilities made available to the labourers at the workplace contribute a lot towards their involvement in work. Table 3 provides the data collected in this regard. Out of the 927 respondent woman labourers, only 6.58 per cent enjoy some of these facilities, while a very large majority, i.e., 93.42 per cent is not provided any facility. The table further shows that 6.15 per cent respondents have been provided the toilet facility at the workplace, while the canteen facility is available to only 2.37 per cent of them. A negligible proportion of the respondents, i.e., just 0.22 per cent have the facility of first-aid.

Table 3: Facilities available to Dalit Woman Labourers at the Workplace

Particulars		Dalit Woman Labourers	
		Number	Percentages
Facilities	Available	61	6.58
	Not available	866	93.42
Total		927	100.00
Type of facilities (multiple responses)	(a) Canteen	22	2.37
	(b) Toilet	57	6.15
	(c) Creche	0	0.00
	(d) First-aid	2	0.22

Source : Field Survey, 2016-17

Health Conditions and Diseases

Though no scientific evidence is available to the effect that the Dalit woman labourers contract occupational diseases, yet a risk to contract any disease always persists due to their continuous exposure to dust and heat at the workplace and unhygienic housing conditions. It has been observed that majority of the Dalit woman labourers are suffering from some serious diseases to general health problems. Table 4 provides the data showing the occurrence of diseases among the Dalit

woman labourers in the rural areas of Punjab. The table reveals that a majority of the respondents, i.e., 61.70 per cent have reported that they are suffering from one or the other disease.

Table 4: Distribution of Dalit Woman Labourers according to type of Diseases

Particulars	Response	Dalit Woman Labourers	
		Number	Percentages
Suffering from any disease	Yes	572	61.70
	No	355	38.30
	Total	927	100.00
Type of diseases (multiple responses)	Body aches	367	39.59
	Bronchial diseases	119	12.84
	Diabetes	195	21.04
	Blood pressure	156	16.83
	Heat exhaustion	138	14.89
	Gynecological diseases	62	6.69
	Uric acid	46	4.96
	Cardiac problem	19	2.05
	Stomach stone	32	3.45

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17

In so far as the types of diseases are concerned, the table further reveals:

- As many as 39.59 per cent respondents suffer from body aches. It may have been due to the manual work which they have to perform for long hours at the workplace.
- Out of the total respondents, 21.04 per cent are suffering from diabetes.
- As many as 16.83 per cent respondents are suffering from blood pressure.
- Another 14.89 per cent of the respondents have reported that they are suffering from eye problems, skin diseases, and blisters on the hands. These diseases occur mainly due to the reason that the

Dalit woman labourers have to work during the extreme temperatures of summer season, especially during the months of May, June and July.

- Out of total respondents, 12.84 per cent suffer from bronchial and respiratory diseases like cough, cold, allergies and tuberculosis. It may be because of their continuous exposure to dust.
- Another 6.69 per cent respondents suffer from one or the other gynecological problems. Excessive manual work and little rest are the reasons given by them for the problems that occur during their pregnancy.
- Further, 4.96, 3.45 and 2.05 per cent of the respondents have reported that they are suffering from uric acid, stomach stone and cardiac problems, respectively.

Caste Discrimination and Sexual Exploitation

The Dalit woman labourers have to face caste discrimination at the workplace. The 'so-called' higher caste employers often use abusive language for them. Table 5 reveals that about one-fourth of the respondents, i.e., 24.49 per cent complained that they face caste discrimination at the workplace. More than six out of ten, i.e., 61.60 per cent of the respondents do not have such kind of complaint; whereas, the remaining 13.92 per cent respondents did not give any response in this regard. During the field survey, it has been observed that all the Dalit woman labourers face caste discrimination. But some of them are used to hearing such words, so they don't mind and complaint to anyone.

Table 5: Caste Discrimination and Sexual Exploitation/ Harassment faced by Dalit Woman Labourers at Workplace

Particulars		Dalit Woman Labourers	
		Number	Percentages
Caste discrimination	Yes	227	24.49
	No	571	61.60
	No response	129	13.92
	Total	927	100.00
Sexual exploitation/ harassment	Yes	51	5.50
	No	222	23.95
	No response	654	70.55
	Total	927	100.00

Source: Field Survey, 2016-17

Since the respondents selected for the study were Dalit woman labourers, it was quite difficult to ask them direct questions about their sexual exploitation at the workplace. Therefore, it was considered appropriate to seek answers about such questions from their husbands, employers and the male co-workers, besides the respondent woman labourers. The questions were put to them in a different way and then inferences were drawn. It was found that 5.50 per cent of the respondents faced sexual exploitation. Another 23.95 per cent respondents faced no such type of harassment at the workplace. However, in majority of the cases (70.55 per cent), there was no response on this issue (Table 5). This may be because of social issues. In reality, almost all the working women are prone to sexual harassment, irrespective of their status, personal characteristics and the types of their employment. They face sexual harassment on way, on transport, at working places, educational institutions and hospitals, home and even in police stations when they go to file complaints (Tyagi, 2016).

Conclusion

The above analysis of living conditions of the Dalit woman labourers reveals that majority of the respondents are living in semi-pucca houses and most of their houses are in dilapidated conditions. It clearly reflects that the Dalit woman labourers have to live under pitiable conditions due to their economic compulsions. They find it hard to even get their houses repaired. The poor economic conditions compel the women to start work as labourers at their early age. It also spoils their childhood. The study reveals that out of 927 respondents, more than half (51.67 per cent) started working as labourers when they were less than 20 years of age. Apart of this, the Dalit woman labourers have to face many problems at their workplace. Out of the total Dalit woman labourers, a very large majority, i.e., 93.42 per cent is not provided any facility at their workplace. The field survey brings out the fact that the respondents, who are enjoying some of the facilities at the workplace, are those working in the industrial units or as domestic servants/mid-day meal or ashra workers.

The study also reveals that majority of the Dalit woman labourers, i.e., 61.70 per cent are suffering from one or the other serious diseases such as body aches, sugar, and blood pressure, bronchia problems, heat exhaustion and the like in the rural areas of Punjab. During the field survey, it was observed that Dalit woman labourers and their family members are suffering from some serious diseases because of their unhygienic living conditions and lack of balanced diet. The medical facilities such as hospitals and laboratories are not available in the rural areas. They can only consult the local medical practitioners re-

garding their health issues. Around one-fourth, i.e., 24.49 per cent of the respondents complain that they face caste discrimination at the workplace. They reported that the 'so-called' higher caste employers often use abusive language for them. It is pertinent to note that 5.50 per cent of the respondents face sexual exploitation at the workplace, whereas a large majority of them (70.60) have not given any response on this issue. This may be because of social issues.

Policy Implications

Policy implications on the basis of the conclusions of the study can be summarized as under:

- The housing conditions clearly show that the Dalit woman labourers have to live under pitiable conditions. To overcome this problem, the rural housing programmes chalked out by the government should bring more and more needy and poor people, particularly the Dalit woman labourers, in its ambit.
- As the study reveals that the Dalit women labourers has to start work at an early age, government policies must ensure that nobody is forced to leave school in between, it may or involve improvement in economic conditions of the families.
- A very large majority of the Dalit woman labourers, i.e., 93.42 per cent are not provided any facility at their workplace. Thus, the government should make it mandatory for the employers to provide minimum basic facilities such as day care centre, first-aid, canteen and toilet to the woman labourers at their workplace.
- The conditions under which Dalit woman labourers work and live expose them to many kinds of diseases. Thus, the situation demands improvement in their working and living conditions, and the medical facilities as well.
- Some of the Dalit woman labourers have complained regarding caste discrimination and sexual harassment in the rural areas of Punjab. Such types of discrimination/harassment hamper the Dalit woman labourers' constitutional rights of equality and dignity. Therefore, rigid and exemplary punishment should be given to the people who are committing these crimes.

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4

Understanding the relationship between Education and Work Participation of females in Kerala.

Archana S R

Introduction

The role of female education has received considerable attention in economic literature recently. Female education has many benefits to society. It is not only fruitful to the present generation, but also creates positive impacts on future generations. It has a lot of social and economic externalities, such as reduction in population growth, improves child health, improved life expectancy of children, decline infant mortality rates. Development economists argue that educating women yields substantial economic benefits. If a cost-benefit analysis is done the benefits exceeds the cost inquired for female education. Participation of females in the labour force enhances economic development. In Developed Countries female labour force participation increased from around 38% in 1970's to around 45% in 1990's and in developing countries it increased from around 20% to 30% (World Employment Report 1998-1999). From the statistics it is clear that the transformation of underdeveloped economies into developed economies is possible through the substantial change in participation of female in the economic activity. In this context it is generally stated that the rate of economic growth and level of education have a significant positive impact on female labour force participation rate.

The study focused on the education and employment in specific case of Kerala. Why Kerala? The state which has highest achievement in female education in India. It is clear that female education has achieved positive development goals such as low fertility and Infant mortality rates, better health status and longer life expectancy at birth. However, the impact of education on the female work force participation is questionable. The work participation rate among females in Kerala is 20.4% in 2018-2019 (NSSO) which is one of the lowest in India.

This low work force participation is accompanied by high rate of unemployment. In the case of Kerala the female labour supply increased due to decline in fertility rate and spread of education has increased the potential job seekers. This paper attempts to address the paradox of the existence of high level of education and high unemployment among women in the state. The study attempts to identify the factors that cause unemployment among educated females in Kerala.

Theoretical Linkages

Theoretical basis of the linkages between education and labour market participation of women can be found in both neoclassical and sociological literature. Neoclassical economists' states that education is an investment because it raises earnings potential of individuals. This increases the opportunity cost of economic inactivity and thus the incentive to search employment (Bowen and Finegan, 1966). In another way education increases wage rate and the substitution effect of a wage rise will induce more women to enter the work force. Another important argument for the existence of a relationship between education and labour force participation is the aspirations effect argument. Accordingly education is one important determinant of income aspirations and expectations, and as such is likely to induce greater economic activity from educated women (Cain, 1966). However, since education also raises income and occupational expectations, a positive relationship cannot be presumed because expectations cannot always be realized. Strong job preference of higher educated women sometimes leads to high rate of female unemployment (Devi, 2001). The changing economic role of women in Kerala shows that it is the growing participation of higher educated women, which has pushed the aggregate female labour force participation rate in the upward direction. Along with education there are other factors that affect labour market outcomes of women. In the context of Kerala, factors like labour market discrimination, migration, demographic transition, and household division of labour also have a direct influence on women's participation in labour market

Data Sources and Research Methods

The present study covers work participation of females under the purview of higher education based on the secondary data sources. The paper is based the 68th (2011-12) round of Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) of National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) and Second (2018-19) Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) of National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI), Government of India. The above surveys measure the employment and unemployment situation in India in a specific in-

tervals. 68th round of survey was the last survey conducted by NSSO in the area of employment and unemployment. In the year 2017-18, NSO introduce yearly PLFS to capture the employment and unemployment situation in India.

Based on the survey, the activities of the persons/individuals are counted using Usual Principal Activity (UPA) status. The UPA status approach measures the activity status of a person during the 365 days (major time criterion) preceding the survey date. Based on the UPA status, the persons are classified in to two major groups. The first group called “labour force”; it includes both employed and unemployed person. The second group namely “out of labour force”; those who are not in the labour force. The work participation rate (WPR) is the per cent of employed persons in the population. The major theme of the paper is work participation of females; hence the paper considers only employed females under the age of 15 to 59 years old females in Kerala. One of the major tools of Logit regression model is used to determine the significance of the variables associated with the entry females in to workforce. In the model, the dependent variable is the Usual Principal Activity (UPA) status of females. The variable contains the values of 1 or 0. Here 1 representing females that are engaged in work and 0 represents the females that not in the workforce. Logit regression generates the logit coefficients to predict a logit transformation of the probability of the presence of females in the work force.

$$\text{Logit (P)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \dots + \beta_k X_k \quad (1)$$

Where P is the probability of the presence of females in work force. β_0 is the constant term. X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k are the independent variables and $\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_k$ are the coefficients of the estimated variables. The logit transformation is defined as the log of odds ratio:

Odds = $\frac{P1-P}{P}$ = Odds of Case / Odds of Non-Case = Probability of Presence of Females in Work Force / Probability of absence of females in Work force

$$\text{Or} \quad (2)$$

$$\text{Logit (P)} = \ln \left(\frac{P}{1-P} \right) \quad (3)$$

Where P is the estimated probability of participation of females in work force. The generalised logit model is

$$\text{(UPA)} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{AGE} + \beta_2 \text{MPCE} + \beta_3 \text{HS} + \beta_4 \text{ES} + \beta_5 \text{SG} + \beta_6 \text{RG} + \beta_7 \text{RH} + \beta_8 \text{MS} + \beta_9 \text{SR} + \varepsilon_i \quad (3)$$

Where, UPA: Usual Principal Activity Status

MPCE : Monthly Per-capita Consumer Expenditure

HS : Household Size

ES : Educational Status

SG : Social Groups

RG : Religious Groups

RH : Relation to Head

MS : Marital Status

SR : Sector

ε : Error Term

Apart from the above usual tables and graphical representation are used to analyze the two rounds of data.

Educational Attainment of Females

Educational attainment of the females are one of the significant factor that determine their employment level. The educational attainment of females in Kerala are depicted in the following table 1. The share of females who are attaining higher education level (graduation & Diploma and PG & Above) in Kerala showing an increasing trend from 2011-12 to 2017-18 whereas, the share of females who are attaining lower educational levels (Middle education and below) were declining over the same period.

Table 1: Share of Females in Various Educational Levels

Education Level	2011-12	2018-19
Illiterate	4.24	3.03
Below Primary & Primary	16.39	10.4
Middle	30.33	26.89
Secondary & Higher Secondary	33.81	35.48
Graduates & Diploma	12.72	19.67
PG & above	2.5	4.53

Source: Author's own calculation from 68th (2011-2012) Round of EUS, NSSO and PLFS (2018-19), NSO

On the improvement of educational level of females, leads to an upward mobility of better work environment. This is clearly shown in the below table 2 that when increasing educational levels helps the females to accrue more regular kind of works compared to lower educational levels.

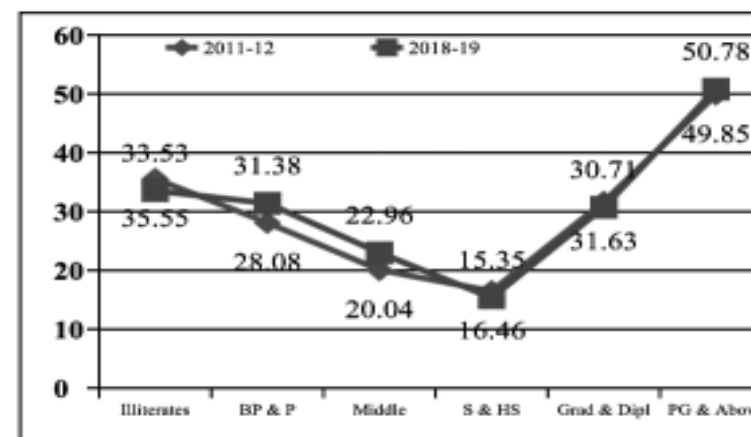
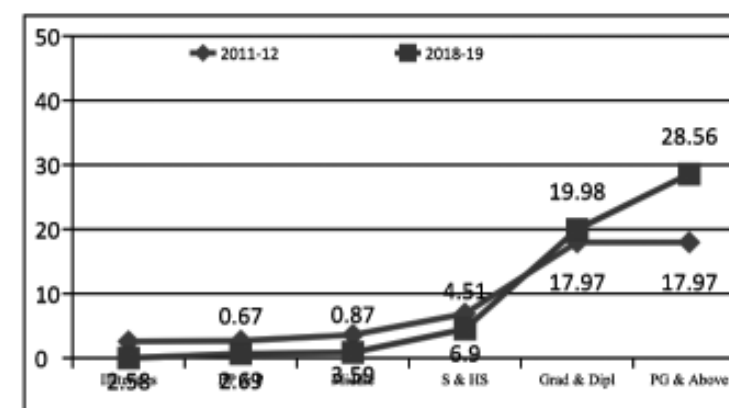
Table 2: Share of Females in UPA Status among Various Educational Levels

UPA Status		Self Empd 1	Regular Wage Work 2	Casual Wage Work 3	Unem- pd 4	Educa- tion 5	Domestic Duties 6	Others 7	WPR (1+2+3)	LFPR (1+2+3+4)	Out of LFPR (5+6+7)
Illiterates	2011-12	7.56	4.29	23.7	2.58	0.00	50.94	10.93	35.55	38.13	61.87
	2018-19	8.53	7.27	17.73	0.00	0.87	46.29	19.31	33.53	33.53	66.47
BP & P ¹	2011-12	5.7	4.57	17.88	2.62	0.53	62.39	6.31	28.15	30.77	69.23
	2018-19	9.48	7.54	14.36	0.67	0.15	56.66	11.14	31.38	32.05	67.95
Middle	2011-12	6.79	4.88	8.37	3.59	6.69	68.6	1.07	20.04	23.63	76.36
	2018-19	8.5	7.98	6.48	0.87	6.76	63.19	6.23	22.96	23.83	76.18
S & HS2	2011-12	6.04	7.22	3.2	6.9	6.21	49.76	0.67	16.46	23.36	76.64
	2018-19	5.02	8.31	2.02	4.51	29.47	46.98	3.69	15.35	19.86	80.14
Graduates & Diploma	2011-12	5.59	24.24	1.82	17.97	10.49	38.3	1.62	31.65	49.62	50.41
	2018-19	4.38	25.53	0.5	19.98	9.69	36.25	3.67	30.41	50.39	49.61
PG & Above	2011-12	2.48	39.42	0.43	25.49	4.58	27.24	0.36	49.85	67.82	32.18
	2018-19	6.52	44.26	0.00	28.56	4.58	14.00	3.42	50.78	79.34	20.67

Source: Author's own calculation from 68th (2011-2012) Round of EUS, NSSO and PLFS (2018-19), NSO

Note: 1 – Below Primary and Primary Education; 2 – Secondary and Higher Secondary

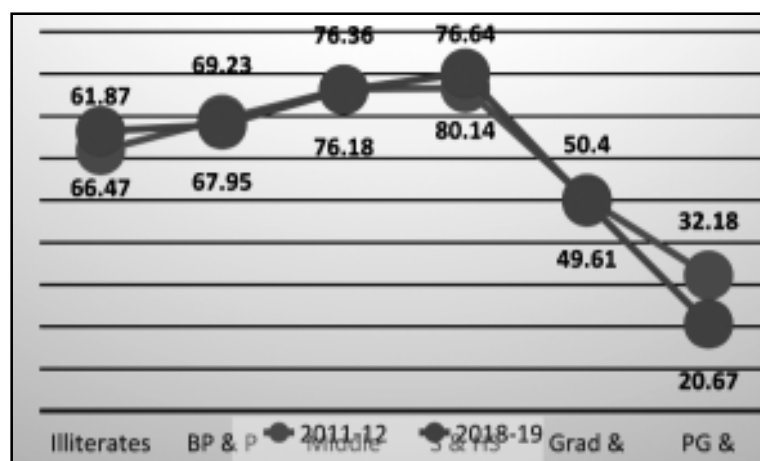
The below figure 1 shows the positive relationship between educational level and females WPR. Up to the educational level of secondary and higher secondary, the WPR of females were declining. The attainment of higher education of degree and above, the WPR showing an upward trend. Among the Graduates and diploma holders, 31.63 and 30.71 per cent of females entered into the workforce in the year 2011-12 and 2018-19 respectively. Whereas half of the PG and above qualified females were engaged in some kind of work. Among this work, major share is in the regular salaried work (Table 2).

Figure 1: Education Level and FWPR**Figure 2: Educational Level and Unemployment among Females**

Source: Author's own calculation from 68th (2011-2012) Round of EUS, NSSO and PLFS (2018-19), NSO

The figure 2 shows the positive relationship between educational level and unemployment rate among females. The economy of Kerala experienced a high level of educated unemployment in recent years. The figure also claims the same finding that on higher educated females, the unemployment rate was very high level when compared to lower level of education. unemployment of illiterate females was zero per cent in the 2017-18 period and at the same time there was a wide gap in the share of unemployment among PG & above qualified females. In this category of females, the unemployment rate was increased from 17.97 per cent to 28.56 per cent from 2011-12 to 2017-18.

Figure 3: Education Level and Out of FLFPR



Source: Author's own calculation from 68th (2011-2012) Round of EUS, NSSO and PLFS (2018-19), NSO

The given figure 3 represents a mirror figure of educational level and FWPR (figure 2). The relationship between education level and share of females in out of Labour Force was negative. At the lower levels of education, more than 60 per cent of the females were under the arena of out of labour force. If a female attain a higher level of education, the share of females in out of labour force was very less especially in the level of PG and above.

Determining Factors of Work Participation Rate

Logit regression model is used to determine the significance of the variables associated with the entry of females in to workforce. There are three models are used to explaining the female's entry into he work force. First model explains the relationship between selected variables

and females' entry into the workforce where all the education levels are under consideration. The second model is for the lower educated female's preference to entry into workforces and third model explain the determining factors of higher educated females' entry into the workforce. From the table 5, the three models are statistically significant (Prob> chi2 or P values are zero for three models) for determining the female's entry into the work force. The Pseudo R2 value of first model shows that the selected variables are determining the 62.69 per cent of the entry of females in the workforce. The model II and III explaining 64.99 per cent and 51.35 per cent of the variations in the females in the workforce.

Table 3: Logit Model Summary

	Model I	Model II	Model III
	All Females Females	Lower Educated	Higher Educated Females
Prob> chi2	0.00 0	0.000	0.000
Log Likelihood	-2742.6725	-2070.3483	-657.4118
Pseudo R2	0.6246	0.6487	0.5086

Source: Author's own calculation from 68th (2011-2012) Round of EUS, NSSO and PLFS (2018-19), NSO

The following table explains the determining factors of the female's entry into the work force.

Table 4: Logit Regression Result (Odds Ratio)

Variables	Model I	Model II	Model III
	All Females	Lower Educated Females	Higher Educated Females
Constant	2.2172***	1.1578	2.6670
Age	1.0071**	1.0123***	1.0240***
MPCE	1.0011***	1.0012***	1.0007***
Household Size	0.8706***	0.8639***	0.9485

Social Group (ST)			
SC	0.6677*	0.6279*	0.6196
OBC	0.3310***	0.2617***	0.8777
Other's	0.2986***	0.2029***	0.9731
Religion (Hindu)			
Islam	0.3371***	0.3197***	0.6107***
Christianity	0.9970	1.0680	0.8396
Relation to Head (Self)			
Spouse of head	1.5571***	1.6756***	1.2052
Married child	1.7873***	2.1219***	1.1906
Spouse of married child	0.9070	1.0720	0.6748
Unmarried child	0.3154***	0.3728***	0.1061***
Others	0.7665*	0.8203	0.5765
Marital Status (Unmarried)			
Married	0.4928***	0.6466	0.1160***
Widowed/Divorced	1.1825	1.7901***	0.2166***
Sector (Rural)			
Urban	0.9215	0.8538***	1.0619
Educational Status (Illiterate)			
Below Primary & Primary	0.9632		
Middle	0.6617***		
Secondary & Higher Secondary	0.5661***		
Graduates & Diploma	1.4269**		
PG & Above	2.4694***		

Model 1 considers all the females in Kerala irrespective of their educational attainment. model 2 considers female with low level of educational attainment and model 3, is about the females with high education. A variable, which is found to have a strong influence on female

labour force participation, is women's education level. The coefficient value of education level in model 1 shows that compared to female with higher secondary and below education, female with higher education has a positive and significant value. It is to be noted that post-graduate and above are more likely to be employed. Age turned out to be an important factor determining the employment status of females. There is a positive relation between age and employment of females. The other two continuous variables MPCE and household size is statistically significant in determining females' entry into workforce. The variables MPCE is positively related to female work participation. Household size negatively associated with females' entry into workforce, but there is no significant relation is found in the case of higher educated females and size of house hold. Another factor found significant in the regression analysis is marital status. It shows that, unmarried female has more probability than married women to have employment. In the case of Widows the probability of work participation is high for all the three models. Coefficient value of higher educated females regarding marital status is significant. Religion does not exert any influence on women's employment as the coefficient of religion turned out to be insignificant except in the case of Islam. The regression result of the variable cast shows that for higher educated females cast has no significant role in choice of employment. The coefficient value of relation to head is irrelevant for higher educated female's employment choice. It is found to be significant for less educated female. The sector whether belong to urban or rural only matters for lower educated females' employment choice.

Level of Education and Nature of Female Employment

The data clearly shows the close association between nature of job and level of education of women in Kerala. majority of workers in elementary occupations are from lowest education category(secondary and below). Among the graduates and above only less than 2 percentage are doing elementary occupations. Females with education level graduation and above are found more in professional and technical jobs. The share of females with higher education(PG and above) in elementary occupations are zero.

Table 5: Share of Employed Females in Different Occupations among Various Educational Levels

Employment (NCO 2004)	Legislators, Senior Officials	Professionals, Technicians	Clerks	Service & Market Workers	Agriculture & Fishery Workers	Workers related to Crafts, Trade Plant & Machine	Elementary Occupations
Illiterates	2011-12	0.00	0.00	6.82	3.92	17.54	62.42
	2018-19	0.00	0.00	7.63	12.04	12.99	61.52
BP & P1	2011-12	1.33	0.00	2.77	6.32	25.57	54.77
	2018-19	0.72	0.00	11.90	20.90	12.53	49.60
Middle	2011-12	3.88	0.46	15.31	10.33	28.26	36.50
	2018-19	2.49	0.90	20.29	18.22	15.89	28.24
S & HS2	2011-12	18.02	7.28	18.67	14.40	14.06	18.39
	2018-19	15.32	8.68	19.26	11.50	13.44	16.55
Graduates & Diploma	2011-12	63.51	17.63	6.50	2.36	3.69	1.58
	2018-19	50.19	21.00	8.61	3.26	4.16	1.26
PG & Above	2011-12	80.77	6.73	0.94	1.05	0.00	0.00
	2018-19	69.58	16.08	1.11	0.00	1.73	0.00

Source: Author's own calculation from 68th (2011-2012) Round of EUS, NSSO and PLFS (2018-19), NSO

Note: 1 – Below Primary and Primary Education; 2 – Secondary and Higher Secondary.

Thus, the overall picture that emerges from the data is that education has an important role in determining the nature of job of women in Kerala. So any policy for improvement of females quality of life must start with improvement in their educational attainment.

Conclusion

Educational attainment of the females is one of the significant factor that determine their employment level. Educational attainment of females in Kerala shows that, the share of females who are attaining higher education level (graduation and above) shows an increasing trend. It is found that both work participation and unemployment rate has increases among highly educated females whereas, declining the level females out of labour force. The available data on nature of employment and education shows a positive relation, majority of workers in elementary occupations are from lowest education category (secondary and below). Females with education level graduation and above are found more in professional and technical jobs. The share of females with higher education (PG and above) in elementary occupations are zero. A rise in higher education has led to an increase in unemployment among women along with an increase in their work participation. It appears that the main factor that affects WPR of higher educated women in the state is the existence of high unemployment rather than low labour force participation. High levels of female unemployment and the persistence of a generated work structure have limited the scope of women's education in increasing their work participation. Thus, it has become clear that education alone does not enable women to acquire gender equality in economic participation.

End Notes

Government of India from the National

1 Statistical Office (NSO) on 23rd May 2019 merged by National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) and Central Statistical Office (CSO)

Usual principal Activity Status code of 11, 12, 21, 31, 41, 51, and 81. Labour Force Participation Rate is number of persons in the labour force per 1000 persons or share of persons who are working or seeking or available for work in the population (NSSO, 2011-12).

Usual principal Activity Status code of 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 97 and 99.

Work Participation Rate is the Labour Force participation rate minus unemployment.

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5

Alcoholic Home Environments: Repercussions on Adolescent Well-Being

K. Suganya and J. Juanita

Introduction

Human potential is one of the most treasured resources that makes development a reality. Women development in specific, envisions the need for women to be optimistic and courageous in dealing with various challenges they are confronted with during different phases of life. Adolescence being termed as a phase of 'stress and storm' for an individual, has its demands in all the domains: physiological, psychological, economic and social. Home environment plays an important role in tapping the potential of an adolescent. Consumption of alcohol and other substances (drugs), are major public health concerns around the globe. The World Health Organization has noted, alcohol and drug use disorders as one of the three behavioural diseases as the leading cause of disability (mental illness and Alzheimer's disease/dementia are the other two).

Narrative experiences of an adolescent who is growing up in an alcoholic home environment are expressed as certain questions that arise in them for which life does not offer answers. Some of the questions listed by the adolescents in an alcoholic home environment are, 'Why should I experience the consequences of irresponsible actions of adults?', 'Aren't my dreams for leading a hopeful life shattered and crushed?', 'When I'm immersed in a state of confusion, shock and agony, how do I not be engulfed in my emotions?', 'Risks are unpredictable and so are my anger outbursts and anxiety attacks'. Adolescents irrespective of gender, experience an intense state of pain and shock in an alcoholic home environment. Unmet expectations in terms of parental love and attachment result in a chronic state of distress. Kenneth et. al., (1991) have carried out a comparative study on a sample of 253 children of alcoholics (COAs) and 237 children of nonalcoholics (non-COAs) in terms of alcohol and drug use, psychopathology, cognitive

ability, and personality. COAs reported more alcohol and drug problems, stronger alcohol expectancies, higher levels of behavioural under control and neuroticism, and more psychiatric distress in relation to non-COAs. They also evidenced lower academic achievement and less verbal ability than non-COAs. (PsycInfo Database Record (c) 2022 APA, all rights reserved). According to WHO Global Status Report on Alcohol 2004, The financial costs of alcohol purchase and medical treatment, as well as lost wages can leave other family members destitute. When men drink it often primarily affects their mothers or partners who may need to contribute more to the income of the household. The economic consequences of alcohol consumption can be severe, particularly for the poor. Apart from money spent on drinks, heavy drinkers may suffer other economic problems such as lower wages and lost employment opportunities, increased medical and legal expenses, and decreased eligibility for loans. A survey in Sri Lanka indicated that for 7% of men, the amount spent on alcohol exceeded their income. Adler & Snibbe, 2003, in their research article stated that those people with higher socio-economic status have access to more health knowledge, better housing and nutrition, and better health care. This study is carried out to explore the well-being of an adolescent who grows up in an alcoholic home environment in 4 domains. An effective preventive strategy for youngsters, caring mechanism for offering social support and a resilience building skill set are also identified and reported.

Significance of the Study

Adolescence is an amazing yet challenging phase of an Individual as it involves rapid growth spurts. Handling one's emotions needs a systematic approach especially during this developmental phase for any person. Alcoholic home environments which differ from a non-alcoholic home environment in terms of risk management, unhealthy communication, poor financial management, health deterioration (physiological and psychological), domestic violence and social stigma makes life even more challenging for the adolescent children in the family. Though there have been self-help groups for the Adult Children of Alcoholics and co-dependents since the 1970s, theorists describe that the adolescent children struggle due to a dysfunctional alcoholic system in which they were raised. Their struggles are in terms of low self-esteem, trust and boundary related issues, dealing with shame and guilt. Research also shows the trends in the age of menarche of girls (i.e) it was 17 years in 1870 and in 2022 it's mostly 11 years (Tanner, 1990). So, more emphasis needs to be given for the health and wellbeing of adolescent girls enabling them to make healthy decisions. In alignment with SDG 3 which is on Good Health & Wellbeing, this research focuses on the socio-economic status and the psychological effects of

alcoholic home environments on adolescents.

Objectives of the study

1. To identify the socio-economic status of adolescents in alcoholic home environments
2. To analyse the psychological effects of adolescents in alcoholic home environments
3. To bring out the relationship between the socio-economic status and the psychological aspects of adolescents in an alcoholic home environment.

Methodology

A group of 35 adolescent undergraduate students of the women's studies programme, who represented diverse academic disciplines were selected for the study. The students were oriented on the theme of reaching out to adolescents in an alcoholic home environment. Immense involvement and participation was received from the participants. The research is done in 3 phases as listed below:

Phase I : Orientation

A comprehensive information on the objective of the research, the factors used for identifying the socio-economic status and psychological well-being of the respondents were shared with the participants. The need for such strategies of reaching out to adolescents who grow up in alcoholic home environments was validated by the researchers and the participants. Offering a non-directive and culture sensitive approach was adopted ensuring the ethical considerations.

Phase II : Focus Group Discussions

Focusing on the chosen Research Problem from a multidisciplinary perspective was encouraged as it would serve as an awareness tool for the group of participants enabling them to reach out to the peer group with confidence. It was an effective preventive strategy as the students from Languages, Sciences, Mathematics and Humanities beautifully enumerated the issue from their academic perspective. It was an in-depth sharing of information.

Phase III : Snowball Technique

To address the sensitive nature of the research problem, snowball technique was adopted. Each of the women's studies students identified a peer sample who is growing up in an alcoholic home environment. Interviews were conducted with utmost diligence. The following steps were followed during the interview process:

Step 1 : Identification of the socio-economic status

Step 2 : Exploration of the factors affecting the psychological wellbeing

Subjective experiences were also narrated by the respondents. Snowball interviews are identified to be the best strategy for reaching out to wider communities.

Tools of Analysis

Collected data were tabulated for the purpose of analysis. Percentages were used to analyse the socio-demographic and economic conditions of the adolescents in alcoholic households.

Simple Ranking technique was used to find out the reasons and consequences of drinking. The adolescents were asked to rank the given seven reasons for consuming alcohol by giving rank 1 to the most urging reason and 2 to the next urging reason and so on and 7 to the least urging reason. Then these ranks were given weightage as 7 to rank one, six to rank 2 and so on and one to rank seven. After multiplying each rank with weights to the total for each reason was found out and the total scores were ranked in ascending order. The top-scoring reason was considered to be the primary most urging reason for drinking. Similar procedure of ranking was followed for consequences of alcoholism.

Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scale is used to analyse the Psychological Wellbeing of the samples. The dimensions include autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations, purpose in life and self-acceptance. Among which, 4 factors are intra-personal, 1 is regarding environmental mastery and 1 factor is on positive relations.

Analysis & Interpretation

Socio-Demographic and Economic Background of the adolescents from Alcoholic Home Environment

In the first section of the analysis the social and demographic factors of the adolescents in alcoholic home environments are analysed using percentage analysis. In the present study, the social and demographic factors include gender, age, religion, marital status, occupation status and household income and expenditure. It not only includes social and demographic factors but also takes into account the information regarding the alcoholics' age of initiation of drinking, frequency of drinking, place of purchase of alcohol. Accidents are increasing year after year and accidents due to alcohol consumption are on raise. Based

on these aspects, percentage analysis is done to identify the reason for the accidents met by the alcoholics.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Background of the Adolescents

Socio-Economic and Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	18	51
Male	17	49
Age		
14-18	4	11
19-22	26	74
23-25	5	14
Type of Settlement		
Rural	13	37
Semi-urban	3	9
Urban	19	54
Religion		
Hindu	30	86
Christian	4	11
Muslim	1	3
Community		
BC	25	71
FC	6	17
SC	4	11
Marital Status		
Unmarried	32	91
Married	3	9
Occupational status		
Student	28	80
Employed	7	20

Type of Family		
Nuclear	29	83
Joint	6	17
House		
Rental	12	34
Lease	4	11
Own	19	54
Number of Members in the Household		
3	4	11
4	21	60
5	9	26
6	1	3
Number of Two-Wheeler(s) Owned		
1	17	49
2	17	49
3	1	3
Four - Wheeler		
No 4-wheelers	29	83
At least one 4-wheeler	6	17

Source: Computed using Primary Data

It is inferred from Table 1 that the percentage of females (52%) is more than the male (48%) adolescents. 74 percent of adolescents belong to the age group of 19-22 years. 54 percent of the respondents are from urban settlements. Majority (86%) of them are Hindus out of which 71% belong to Backward Community. 91 percent of the adolescents are unmarried out of which 80 percent are students. 83 percent of the respondents live in nuclear families with an average family size of three to four members in a household. 54 percent of the respondents reside in their own house. All the adolescents own two-wheeler(s) at home, and 49 percent of them have two two-wheelers. Only 17 percent of the respondents own cars.

Table 2: Level of Household Income of the Adolescents

Level of Household Income	Percentage
Low	23
Middle	49
High	29
Total	100

Source: Computed using Primary Data

Note: Figures in parenthesis represents percentage

Table 2 reveals that 49 percentage of adolescents in alcoholic home environments belong to the middle income group with a household income ranging from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 50, 000 a month.

Table 3: Drinking Behaviour of the Alcoholics

Drinking Behaviour of the Alcoholics	Frequency	Percentage
Age of Initiation of Drinking		
Up to 18	6	18
19-23	14	40
24-29	8	23
30 and above	7	20
Influential Factor for drinking		
Introduced by relatives	4	11
Introduced by friends	20	57
On Own	8	23
Others	3	9
Drink Frequently		
Frequently	22	63
Occasionally	13	37
Preference of Brand		
Particular brand	22	63
All variety	13	37

Place of Purchase of Alcohol		
TASMAC	20	57
Wines shop	5	14
Private bar	10	29
Met with accident		
Yes	9	26
No	26	74

Source: Computed using Primary Data

It is evident from table 3 that 40 percent of the respondents started drinking in the age group between 19-23 years. 57 percent of alcoholics are influenced by their friends. Majority (63%) of the alcoholics consume alcohol almost daily (5-7 times a week) and all of them prefer to consume a particular variety of alcoholic beverage. It is observed that 57 percent of the people who consume alcoholic beverages purchase the drink from TASMAC shops. 26 percent of the respondents alcoholic family members met with road accidents and among them 13 percent have paid a penalty ranging from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 100000 at the time of accident.

Table 4 Level of Income by Proportion of Income spent on Alcohol Consumption

Household Income	Upto 10%	10-20%	20-30%	30% & above	Total
Low	1 (20)	2 (40)	2 (40)	--	5 (100)
Middle	5 (38)	3 (23)	2 (16)	3 (23)	13 (100)
High	12 (71)	3 (18)	2 (12)	--	17 (100)
Total	18 (51)	8 (23)	6 (17)	3 (9)	35 (100)

Source: Computed using Primary Data

Note: Figures in parenthesis represents percentage

Table 5 Level of Household Income by Proportion of Income Spent on Education

Household Income	Upto 10%	Above 10%	Total
Low	4 (80)	1 (20)	5 (100)
Middle	11 (85)	2 (15)	13 (100)
High	17 (100)	--	17 (100)
Total	32 (91)	3 (9)	35

Source: Computed using Primary Data

Note: Figures in parenthesis represents percentage

Table 6: Monthly Per Capita Income and Expenditure by Level of Household Income

Level of Household Income	Monthly per capita expenditure (Rs.)	Proportion of income spent on Consumption (%)	Monthly per capita income (in Rs.)		Potential increase in disposable income	Burden on monthly household expenditure	
			With alcohol consumption	Without alcohol consumption		With alcohol consumption	Without alcohol consumption
Low	1247	143	2791	4094	1303	1544	2847
Middle	1435	61	8899	9917	1018	7464	8482
High	2107	38	25363	26717	1354	23256	24610

Source: Computed using Primary Data

It is obvious from table that the high income group is not affected because of affordability but low income and middle income groups are much affected by the alcohol consumption. If they give up the habit of drinking not only their monthly debt burden (Rs. 1544) gets reduced but also their disposable income per head increases by Rs.2847 which will make the family better off. Thus it is evident that addressing this serious issue by helping adolescents in an alcoholic home environment to come out of the psychological trauma and motivating them to be economically independent would not only increase their economic status but in turn will increase their social status as well.

Table 7: Reasons for and Consequences of Drinking

Rank	Reasons for Drinking	Consequences of drinking
I	Failures in life	Disrespect in the family
II	Family problems	Low efficiency at work
III	Peer pressure	Economic instability
IV	Social Status	Low status in the Society
V	Financial crisis	Disobedience of law and order
VI	Pass time	Unpleasant behaviour
VII	Unemployment	Low self-esteem

Source: Computed using Primary Data

Failure in life is the cause of drinking that is ranked first and the most predominant consequence of drinking is loss of respect in the family. The other factors are ranked in subsequent orders as shown in the table.

Psychological Aspects

The psychological dimension of adolescent well-being is very significant as it has the power to influence the individual's choices. Analysis on the various factors of psychological well-being of Adolescents is carried out using Ryff's PWB scale.

Table: 8 Factors contributing to Psychological Well-being of Adolescents

Psychological Aspects		Gender of the Adolescents		
		Male	Female	Total
Autonomy	Unfavourable	12 (79)	7 (39)	19 (54)
	Favourable	5 (21)	11 (61)	16 (46)
	Total	17 (100)	18 (100)	35 (100)
Environmental Mastery	Unfavourable	10 (44)	13 (56)	23 (66)
	Favourable	7 (58)	5 (42)	12 (34)
	Total	17 (100)	18 (100)	35 (100)
Personal Growth	Unfavourable	9 (53)	10 (56)	19 (54)
	Favourable	8 (47)	8 (44)	16 (46)
	Total	17 (100)	18 (100)	35 (100)

Positive Relations	Unfavourable	12 (71)	10 (56)	22 (63)
	Favourable	5 (29)	8 (44)	13 (37)
	Total	17 (100)	18 (100)	35 (100)
Purpose in Life	Unfavourable	10 (59)	9 (50)	19 (54)
	Favourable	7 (41)	9 (50)	16 (46)
	Total	17 (100)	18 (100)	35 (100)
Self-Acceptance	Unfavourable	8 (47)	13 (72)	21 (60)
	Favourable	9 (53)	5 (28)	14 (40)
	Total	17 (100)	18 (100)	35 (100)

Source: Computed using Primary Data

Note: Figures in parenthesis represents percentage

Table: 9 Comparative Analysis of the Six Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being

	Autonomy	Environmental mastery	Personal growth	Positive Relations	Purpose in life	Self acceptance	Total Score
High	16	11	15	17	15	16	17
Medium	5	7	5	6	5	6	4
Low	14	17	15	12	15	13	14
Total	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
Median Value							
	25	27	26	27	26	26	156

Source: Computed using Primary Data

Table 9 shows that environmental mastery, personal growth and purpose in life are the 3 factors of psychological well being that are most demanding for adolescents in alcoholic home environments.

The choice of alcohol consumption as an alternative to facing the pain due to the failures in life leads the individual towards various unfavourable outcomes. Interpretation of the results on the 6 dimensions of psychological well-being are listed below:

- **Autonomy:** For male respondents, unfavourable condition (79%) is more than the favourable condition whereas it is the vice-versa for the female respondents (61% - favourable). The society being patriarchal, autonomy of both men and women is a significant factor that impacts development of women. Because, autonomy is vital for intrinsic motivation.
- **Environmental Mastery:** The scores on environmental mastery is predominantly favourable (58%) for male participants and 42% favourable for female participants. It is evident that for females, the scores are higher for the unfavourable conditions in environmental mastery and it is perceived as a real threat to be questioned with regard to adolescent well-being in all dimensions.
- **Personal Growth:** Higher unfavourable conditions are observed for male participants and for female participants. So, personal growth is identified as a potential zone for the development of adolescent girls in alcoholic home environments.
- **Positive Relations:** 71% of the male respondents have reported unfavourable conditions for positive relations. Among the female participants, 56% have reported unfavourable conditions with regard to positive relations. Peer relationships also play a vital role in shaping one's adolescent identity.
- **Purpose in Life:** The results show that partially favourable conditions for Purpose in Life is evident for most of the female participants and unfavourable for most of the male participants. Clarity with regard to purpose in life is needed among most of the adolescent children who grow up in alcoholic home environments.
- **Self-Acceptance:** 72% of the female respondents have difficulty in self-acceptance. Accepting oneself has a direct implication on self worth and it is reported that adolescent girls who grow up in alcoholic home environments experience challenges with regard to self-acceptance.

Environmental Mastery and Self-Acceptance are the 2 dimensions where female participants show more unfavourable conditions. Personal Growth is partially favourable. In the context of women development, it is reported that the above-mentioned factors are the key elements to be nurtured for adolescent girls who grow up in alcoholic home environments. On the other hand, male participants show more unfavourable conditions in Autonomy, Positive Relations and Personal Growth. These are identified to be the factors that have repercussions on the adolescent's psychological well-being.

Conclusion

Through the narrative experiences shared, dealing with the feelings of anger, guilt, stress, insecurity and helplessness is the greatest challenge for the adolescent in alcoholic home environments. Offering them appropriate psychological support will help them in improving their skills of environmental mastery, personal growth and purpose in life. This will enable them to be economically independent individuals with an enhanced sense of self-acceptance and social status. Well-being in one domain will act as a triggering factor for the same in other domains.

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6

Impacts of COVID-19 on Women**Harjeet Kaur****Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the world, bringing it to a halt with unprecedented changes in the economy and society. Because of globalization, the coronavirus spread quickly, prompting the majority of nations to implement a lockdown to slow its spread. However, the impact has been different for different social groups, with the most vulnerable section being affected differently as a result of pre-existing social inequalities. The lockdown, in particular, has widened existing gender inequalities and limited women's opportunities (Chauhan, 2020). It became clear that male mortality rates were higher than female mortality rates. However, women were more likely to bear the brunt of the pandemic's social and economic consequences. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, mothers in the United Kingdom were 1.5 times more likely than fathers to have quit or lost their jobs during the lockdown (Burki, 2020). Gender-based violence, which was already a global crisis prior to the pandemic, has worsened since COVID-19's outbreak. Lockdowns and other mobility restrictions had trapped many women with their abusers, cutting them off from social contact and support networks. Increased economic insecurity had made it even more difficult for many women to leave abusive situations. Economic and social instability caused by COVID would also increase the risk of child marriage, female genital mutilation, and human trafficking. At the same time, the pandemic had exposed women leaders to the backlash, resulting in online and offline threats, abuse, and harassment (COVID-19: Rebuilding for Resilience, n.d.). When economic crises struck, women and girls suffered greatly. Women were disproportionately working in an informal economy with low social protection, and in most single-parent households, women were saving and earning less globally. So, they could not have dealt with the economic losses like men. Moreover, policies of school shutdowns and social distancing led to a rise in women's unpaid care, and they were unable to take or handle

paid work. In developing countries, the situation was more worrisome, where a large part of the population was working in informal sectors with low social protections, i.e., paid sick leave, health insurance, etc. (UN Secretary). Women made up only 24 per cent of the workforce in India prior to the pandemic, but their share of job losses was 28 per cent during the pandemic. With the rise in unpaid care work, around 70 per cent of income was lost by women during the lockdown. Furthermore, the increased home workload may make it difficult for women to return to their jobs, with long-term economic consequences. Overall, the crisis has worsened the situation of already weak women, such as Muslim, single, separated, divorced, widowed, and migrant women (Dalberg.com, 2021). Women's and girls' access to healthcare had been hampered, confinement measures had increased gender-based violence, and girls had been disadvantaged and marginalized. In March 2020 and September 2021, women left their jobs more than men for family reasons, leading to a 26 per cent job loss by September 2021. Women and girls were leaving schools 1.21 times more than men and boys, but for different reasons than school shutdowns. Women were also 1.23 times more likely than men to report an increase in gender-based violence during the pandemic (Flor et al., 2022). According to data from 16 countries, women provided 29 per cent more childcare per week than men during the pandemic. According to survey results from 13 countries, nearly one in every two women has experienced violence or knows someone who has since the outbreak began (COVID-19: Rebuilding for Resilience, n.d.). Indeed, it is a matter of concern that, as women and girls are experiencing similar problems as previous health crises, we are unable to learn from history. At the time of the Ebola outbreak, there was an increase in abuse, violence, and exploitation of women and girls (COVID-19's Impact on Women's Health and Rights, 2021). Aside from the immediate crisis in the labor market, there are some opposing forces that are working positively to increase gender equality. First, working from home is becoming the new normal and is likely to continue. Second, currently, the distribution of labor in household work and child care is unequal, and due to the lockdown, many fathers are now interested in taking primary care of their children (Alon et al., 2020).

Progress toward Gender Equality before the Pandemic

Progress toward gender equality had been uneven even prior to the pandemic. The gender effects of the pandemic draw the attention of the world toward the inequitable progress of gender equality. Growth in gender parity in 2014–2019, both in work and society, persisted at a relatively similar pace. The global GPS (Gender Parity Score) was 0.61 in 2019, which was 0.60 in 2014. It is measured on a scale of 0 to 1, where 1 implies complete equality between women and men. The GPS

of work is 0.52 and that of society is 0.67, i.e. Gender equivalence at work continues to trace gender equivalence in society. In the last five years, India has experienced a small fall in female labor force participation, whereas Indonesia has seen a slight increase (Madgavkar et al., 2022). The following diagram shows the progress in gender equality. The world has made strides toward gender equality in a few areas, including political representation, professional and technical jobs, and maternal mortality. Women saw an increase in leadership positions and legal protection. However, women's labor force participation is roughly two-thirds that of men and has remained stable over that time period. Countries and regions can have significant differences in the overall picture.

From 2014 to 2019 some gender-parity indicators showed positive progress, although the female labour-force participation rate stayed flat.

World Average Gender-Parity Indicators

	Gender equality in work	2014	2019	CAGR %
1	Labour-force participation rate, Ratio of female to male	0.64	0.64	0.0
2	Professional and technical jobs, Ratio of female to male	0.71	0.73	0.3
3	Leaderships positions, Ratio of female to male	0.35	0.37	1.4
4	Formal employment, Ratio of female to male	N/A	0.86	N/A
5	Unpaid care work, Ratio of female to male Gender equality in society	0.32	0.33	0.3
6	Unmet need for family planning, % of women	0.12	0.13	-0.1
7	Maternal mortality, Per 100,000 births	146	134	-2.2
8	Education level, Ratio of female to male	0.91	0.91	0.0
9	Financial inclusion, Ratio of female to male	0.75	0.73	-0.7
10	Digital inclusion, Ratio of female to male	0.85	0.86	0.3

11	Legal protection, Index	0.50	0.54	1.2
12	Political representation, Ratio of female to male	0.22	0.26	4.2
13	Sex ratio at birth, Ratio of female to male	1.08	1.07	-0.2
14	Child marriage, % of girls and young women	0.12	0.13	-2.4
15	Violence against women, % of women	N/A	0.13	N/A

Source: McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Economic Impacts

In the global pandemic, it was estimated that 4.5 per cent of women's employment was at risk, compared to 3.8 per cent of men's employment. The reason for this was that three of the four most affected industries were dominated by women. In comparison to the overall share of women in world employment, i.e., 39 per cent, women had 54 per cent of global jobs in housing and food service; these two are among the worst hit sectors by the pandemic; 43 per cent and 46 per cent of jobs in retail and wholesale trade; and other services, including the arts, recreation, and public administration, respectively. According to statistics, due to crises, women are 1.8 times more likely to be in dangerous situations than men. Women have a 39 per cent share of world employment, however, and a 54 per cent share of overall job losses. The extent of the inequality was surprising: according to data from the United States and India, 5.7 per cent of females and 3.1 per cent of males were losing their jobs. As per data at the country level, before the coronavirus outbreak, women had a 46 per cent share of the workforce in the United States. According to industry-mix effects, women accounted for 43 per cent of job losses. However, according to unemployment statistics, women accounted for 54 per cent share of all job losses. Likewise, females had a 20 per cent share in the labor force prior to the coronavirus in India; as per industry mix alone, they accounted for 17 per cent of job losses, but as per unemployment surveys, they actually accounted for 23 per cent of overall job losses. (Madgavkar et al., 2022).

Unpaid Care Work

According to ILO estimates, unpaid work accounted for 16.4 billion hours per day, with women contributing more than three-fourths of the total, which is "equivalent to 2.0 billion people working full-

time for free." In India, women spend an average of 351.9 minutes per day on unpaid work, while men spend an average of 51.8 minutes per day. Furthermore, data show that women in India spend 536.6 minutes per day on total paid and unpaid work, compared to 442.3 minutes per day for men. According to World Bank data, female labour force participation has dropped from 32 per cent in 2005 to 21 per cent in 2019. Cleaning the house, cleaning the dishes, cooking, childcare, elderly care, and laundry are among the chores included in unpaid work. (Chauhan, 2020). During the pandemic, the burden of unpaid care increased significantly. Women do around 75 per cent of all unpaid care work globally. In South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), women perform up to 90 per cent of unpaid care work. In India, household chores increased by 30 per cent due to the pandemic, and it rose by 1.5–2.0 hours in the United States as per a survey (Madgavkar et al., 2022).

Health Care

Women played an important role in the COVID-19 healthcare response. Women make up approximately two-thirds of the global health workforce, and while they are under-represented among physicians, dentists, and pharmacists, as per the data in the 104 countries, they have an approximately 85 per cent share in nurses and midwives. Nearly 50 per cent of doctors in OECD countries are now female. Women also constitute the vast majority of the long-term care (LTC) workforce—just over 90 per cent on average across OECD countries. Despite the fact that women make up a large share of healthcare workers, their share in senior or leadership positions in healthcare is low (OECD).

Impact on Sexual and Reproductive Health

The majority of nations did not maintain women's sexual and reproductive health during the COVID-19 period, increasing their risks. According to the United Nations Population Fund, women in 115 low- and middle-income countries who were unable to take advantage of family planning services faced an average of 3.6 months of disruption, leading to an expected 7 million unwanted pregnancies. In Nepal, the pandemic weakened maternal health services; amid COVID-19, from March 2020 to June 2021, 258 women died due to pregnancy or delivery; the number of deaths was 51 in the previous year (World Economic Forum, 2021). During the shutdown and the months that followed, women in the countryside were unable to take female hygiene products and contraception. During the initial six months of the coronavirus, women had expected approximately 24 lakh unplanned pregnancies, most of them among less-educated women with minimal access to contraception (Dalberg.com, 2021). According to Marie Stopes International,

which provides contraception and safe abortion, the pandemic could prevent up to 95 million girls and women from accessing their services this year (Burki, 2020). Prior to the crisis, nearly 810 women died every day for preventable reasons (such as pregnancy and delivery), with 94 per cent of the deaths occurring in underdeveloped and developing countries. Disruptions in routine health care and decreased access to food would result in a rise in child and maternal deaths: 118 underdeveloped and developing nations would experience a rise in under-5 deaths of 9.8 to 44.7 per cent per month and an increase in maternal deaths of 8.3 to 38.6 per cent per month (Women, n.d.).

Impact on Gender-Based Violence

"Violence against women" is defined as "physical, sexual, or emotional distress or pain to women." According to the UN policy brief, 25 per cent of violence rose against females; in Turkey, 36 women were killed just in July 2020; and in Quebec, 10 women were killed in the first quarter of 2021, compared to 12 women in the entire year of 2020. Due to the pandemic context, women were unable to take help from support services like health, police, and legal. Women had no choice but to remain imprisoned with their abusers (Women, n.d.). The United Nations Development Programme estimated that 243 million women and girls worldwide would be victims of physical or sexual violence by 2020. A number of countries had even declared states of emergency in response to gender-based violence and femicide. Domestic violence reports increased by 30 per cent in France, while helplines in Cyprus and Singapore received 30 per cent and 33 per cent more emergency calls, respectively. Argentina's emergency calls for domestic violence cases have increased by 25 per cent since the lockdown on March 20. Domestic violence and a rise in demand for emergency shelters have been reported in countries such as Canada, Germany, Spain, the United States, and the United Kingdom (UN Secretary-General).

Impact on Girls and Young Women

Girls and young women are both among the weakest sections of society during times of crisis and thus face greater risks. As per the study in BMJ Paediatrics, in the midst of the coronavirus, gender inequalities in different areas, i.e., family violence, the pressure of forced marriages, and marital rape, increased, especially among girls and young women. According to an approximation by UNESCO, 11 million girls would not be able to rejoin schools (World Economic Forum, 2021).

Increase in Poverty

An additional 47 million women and girls are expected to push themselves into extreme poverty and widen the gender poverty gap due

to COVID-19 (COVID-19: Rebuilding for Resilience, n.d.). Currently, 55 per cent of the world's houses are in sub-Saharan Africa, and it is projected to increase to 63 per cent by 2030. The Central and Southern Asia region, which had significantly succeeded in eradicating poverty, would account for 32 per cent of the world's poor women, rather than the previously predicted 29 per cent. Furthermore, 75 out of 131 low- and middle-income countries have a gender-poverty gap between the age groups 25–34 (Women, n.d.).

Policy Recommendations:

Women and girls are suffering from particular economic, social, and health consequences, ranging from disproportionate job losses to increased gender-based violence, which must be addressed through targeted policy interventions.

We should reconsider those means that are essential to protect and empower women and girls.

Women's access to health and education services should be increased to make them stronger against any kind of crisis, i.e., health, economic, and social.

As with men, women must be given higher positions in every field to empower women and achieve gender equality.

Women should be given equal opportunities in acquiring jobs, and equal wages must be provided to them.

The funding of the organizations that are working for women has been increased so that they can access more women and protect them.

Conclusion

COVID-19 impacted the life of every person in the entire world. However, it hits the most vulnerable section of society, i.e., women and girls, and intensifies the existing gender inequalities. One major reason for the virus's bigger impact on women than men is that it intensifies the load of unpaid work, which is mostly done by women. Due to working in the informal sector, which was severely affected, women's employment is dropping faster than men's. Due to the lockdown, women were unable to access law and order because nations employed all their focus to reduce the impact of COVID-19, which led to an increase in domestic violence against women. Women could not access healthcare services amid social distancing, which negatively impacted their sexual and reproductive health. Governments of different nations designed many policies to curb the pandemic, but these measures failed to solve

women's-related problems. The COVID-19 outbreak endangered the growth of gender equality, which had been achieved for many years. Governments around the world should implement women-specific policies to address this injustice and promote gender equality.

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7

Breaking down barriers of Racial Oppression and Cultural Marginalization of women in Vikas Khanna's The Last Color

Parvathi Krishnan U

From time immemorial, the traumatic experiences of women and children have been affected by discrimination, disempowerment and lack of opportunities. The atrocities committed against them, like abuse, abandonment etc make it to the headlines everyday. Women have always been considered inferior to men by patriarchy, both in biological and mental spheres. Eliminating gender discrimination and empowering women around us is a paramount challenge of the world today. Despite the honour and reverence attributed to them in mythology or the tributes paid to them as personified in historical documents, ground realities say a different tale. Though the status of women have improved drastically with the turn of the century with better opportunities and education, there is still a long way to go for creating a balance in equality for all the genders.

Vikas Khanna, India's Michelin star chef's debutant novel *The Last Color* published in 2018 by Bloomsbury Publishing, tells the story of an unlikely friendship of a widow with an orphan, who vows to add colour to her life. It also questions the religious rituals concerning the practice of Widowhood in India, where in holy cities of Varanasi or Mathura, abandoned widows, disowned by their families take refuge in the shrines of the temples in the city, living lives in anonymity. The female characters in this movie are all fighting their demons, one way or the other. Choti is a Dalit, orphan, picked up from the garbage dump by a deaf street cleaner, left to live in a "house with plastered pink walls" with other abandoned children. She does odd jobs to sustain herself but her talent is street-rope walking. She dreams of attending school with the money she earns with her skill but all her hopes are shattered when Chintu, her friend squanders away all their money in betting. They are chased away and hunted down by the local inspector Raja and his con-

stables who levy unlawful taxes from them. Noor is a widow of a nearby ashram who frequents the banks of the river Ganga, partly to vile away her time and to get away from her oppressive inmate Asha. After some unsuccessful attempts Choti befriends her. Another friend of Choti is Anarkali, a transgender who begs in traffic signals blessing strangers to all sorts of dreams, for money. She is victimized by Raja and his men, physically abusing, regularly raping her, threatening to do the same to Choti, whom she is very fond of, if she discloses the truth to anyone. Raja's wife Rani, wants to educate and give a good life to her daughters but a patriarchal dictator like Raja just wants her to give birth to a son who will be an heir to his family lineage. The initial scene of their meeting, Choti is seen swearing and even Noor feels she as a street girl cannot be shown any affection, as she is an untouchable. The movie raises some pertinent questions about the thinking of so-called progressive society we live-in; the 21st century India which still discriminates an orphan, as an untouchable, a person without a good lineage or purity of bloodline. Noor is also leading a life of abstinence, as an inauspicious, bad omen of the society, devoted to asceticism, atoning for the sins of her dead husband on earth. Anarkali, the transgender is violated repeatedly, against her will by the misusers of power like Raja and his goons who see her and the street children as vermin of the society. It is clear from the derogatory words that are used for addressing her. Rani is solely seen as a 'son' minting machine, a namesake wife, who has no other go but put up with Raja's domestic violence, to support her children. All these women are bogged down by the society which sees them as outcasts, shunned from the mainstream society, bonding over their miseries, a sisterhood, an unlikely friendship is formed and thus, becomes the crux of the story.

Their oppression is deeply rooted in feminist literary thought. Systemic or institutional oppression refers to the mistreatment of individuals within a social identity and is enforced by the society and the theory of intersectionality refers to the modes of oppression meted out to individuals on the basis of their race, gender, class, sexual orientation and other identity markers. The mainstream is not designed to include such oppressed groups of women or victims who face tremendous barriers to seek justice. As an orphan, a transgender, a widow, with no particular value or position, the society sanctions the ill-treatment meted out to them. The refusal of the chai Walla to serve them at the cafeteria or the scene where Choti is spit upon by the driver, luring her for a mere candy are all instances of harsh realities of life, they experience on a daily basis.

Further in the movie, we find that the oppressive behaviour can take any form ranging from hurtful remarks like those made by Rani's

mother-in-law, who curses her for not birthing a son in the family to the verbal insults lashed out at Anarkali everyday and Raja's physical and sexual violence on Rani and Anarkali respectively. The phenomenon of oppression here talks about the psychological effects of social oppression on the victim leading to her subjugation. Merriam Webster dictionary defines oppression as the

“unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power especially by the imposition of burdens, the condition of weighing down, an act of pressing down, a sense of heaviness or obstruction in the body or mind.” (Merriam-WebsterDictionary)

Theoretically, the framework of the movie deals with the traditional Marxian notion of repressive power of the dominant ruling over the vulnerable but also it deals with normalizing power, their oppression, both cultural and racist, is deeply rooted in feminist literary thought. The oppressive tendency of Raja is evident right from the start, both in his domestic and work front. He rules the place with the authority of a king, ordering everyone as he pleases. The Last Colour discusses how these societal norms and cultural practices impinge negatively on the women in general and widows in particular, forcing them to lead colorless lives, away from the society.

Choti's caste and race is a problematic probe where the driver who spits on her, represents the society itself who see them worthy of, only being spit upon. Nobody is going to question their acts or authority. Anarkali is threatened repeatedly to subjugation and is not murdered until she discloses the truth of her mistreatment to Rani, strictly resisting her subjugation. Asha, Noor's inmate has the luxury of a separate bed and at least a tattered mosquito net, due to the supremacy of her high class birth. She wields her power through her race and education over Noor, making her a subservient inmate, a second class member, in the room, entrusted with meagre jobs such as sweeping and stitching while, she takes care of more prestigious work, like being in-charge of rationing meals to the inhabitants and doing accounts of the ashram. She calls Noor a morally “fallible” woman for having applied nail polish on her toes; this is an act of religious denigration to Asha, for Noor has clearly foregone her duties on earth as a widow and thus she starts starving Noor cutting down her ration, but keeping all these to herself until Noor brings a frightened Choti to hide her from the policemen but are intimidated by Asha.

Educator Paulo Friere suggests “liberation as a social act, a process of becoming free from ideologies that limit our freedom and institutions and structures that constrain people's collective determination”. (Friere 348)

Psychologist Martin Baro in his book *Writings for a Liberation Psychology* describes liberation as the

“dismantlement of power and oppression, striving to create a social change and that recognizes the humanity and dignity of all people”. (Baro 1127)

Invisible chains of patriarchy and gender identities bind these women never to return to their homes by adhering to historically defined repetitive roles. They are affected by the cultural trauma, their identities thus lacks coherence and stability. Anarkali, originally called Laxmi, is abandoned by her parents in a film theatre but she boldly refuses to return to her family, naming herself after the heroine of the movie she was left to watch in the theatre but the sight of a film theatre from then on haunts her. She is called 'a ghost of the underworld' for living in the drainage sewage pipe underground, where she shares the space with a snake, which she feels is less vile than the over ground people.

Theorist Gerda Lerner argues that the theory of feminist consciousness is in

“the development of the awareness that once maltreatment is there it's not due to the individual deficits but membership in a group that has been unfairly subordinated and that can be, and should be changed to give equal power and value to them”. (Lerner 995)

Mostly deprived of education or any life skills these widows continue to live by the patriarchal norms ordained upon them, like Noor, who is touched by Choti's warmth in serving her a cup of tea, from her mere income and that too with sugar, which is forbidden for a widow. As women they also face the double disadvantage of gender and marital status. Noor is forced to live on meagre meals and abject poverty. Her prized possessions in middle age, includes a book of Tagore's poems left by her grandfather, a watering pot left by the previous inmate and a faded saree from her yester life, that too, from which she stitches a frock for Choti. Economic viability of these women are all questionable where the power points exert pressure on their independence. By levying taxes from their scanty earnings by Raja and his goons give us a picture of corruption that is quite parasitic in nature. Choti's wish for education, Rani's inability to walk out of her marriage, Noor's fear of crossing Ganga and start afresh are all rooted in their inability to have economic sustainability.

The movie documents social, cultural and personal histories being passed down from women to women over oral narratives about different customs, traditions seasonal festivities which is a kind of fe-

male historiography where women are bonding over shared histories of happiness and pain. It religiously sanctioned that while Hindu scriptures are more binding, taxing and confining to the women as they are more connected to the female body. That is, Rani has to regularly keep prayers and visit the sacred pond and take a dip in its waters for the birth of a son while there is no such confinement of spirituality for Raja; he can even leave a Pooja midway while Rani has to keep all religious ordeals in check. Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* argues

“they have no past, no history no religion of their own and unlike the proletariat, they have no solidarity of labour or interest. They even lack their own space.” (Beauvoir 663)

Noor instinctively reaches out to Choti, and even hears of Anarkalis', their sufferings form a sister hood of affection and warmth, through moments of shared communion. She gives her the confidence to rise up in life defeating all odds and shine like a moon, eclipsing the Sun.

Noor has always been a docile, submissive woman who knows that she is happily fulfilling the obligations of life but she too is disgusted by the moral hypocrisy of the patriarchal male dominated world which imposes social rules on women alone in the name of culture while giving man freedom to live their life as he pleases, she hopes to take care of Choti as a mother and to live their life in a far away place but the last moment she's taken away by the policemen. By the end, we find a more resolute Choti, who flouts social norms, breaches dogmas of widowhood, finds resistance and power, to keep her promise to the dead Noor, throwing 'gulaal' or colours of holy onto her funeral procession. She gets a good life with reporter Rekha Saxena, who exposes Raja's scandals, exposing him. Choti, later, adopting the name of Noor Saxena, becomes an eminent lawyer of the Supreme court, who fights for the rights of widows and transgenders in life.

The movie sheds light on the sad plight of widows about the social ostracism they face relegating their lives to the margins. Jasbir Jain in his essays on *Feminizing Political Discourse* states the “real social problem is not waywardness or immorality but the deprivation of domestic and sexual happiness for hundreds and thousands of widows who are expected to forgo all pleasures of life, right from bodily beauty, colour, freedom and companionship.” (Jain 22)

One can find the traditional power structures visibly networking in the movie but we cannot be blind to the lesser visibly dormant modes of power acting here, say the equation of social conditioning that lead to their subjugation and the religious sanctioning by the Hindu scrip-

tures that factualize this social alienation of the suffering groups of women and children. The threat of power, religious and cultural dogmas make these women follow patriarchy unconditionally. Their cultural vulnerability as well as economic viability are all rooted in the roles preordained by social institutions, normalizing it making us believe in certain belief systems as righteous, constructing our worldview. As carriers of culture, women like almost everyone is subjected to this power, nobody is free from its purview.

Indian patriarchy recognizes the social status of a woman only through the presence or even the absence of a man the latter of which she endures a social death when widowhood in addition to being a personal status is also a social institution. The stigmatization of women and children are aggravated. As Michel Foucault in *Power/ Knowledge* suggests

“what makes power hold good what makes it accepted is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no but that it traverses and produces things, induces pleasure, forms knowledge and produces discourses.” (Foucault 412-13)

Cathy Caruth in her *Unclaimed Experience* terms this “acceptance as the language of trauma and silence of its mute repetition of suffering.” (Caruth 449) With such rituals and religious sanction consequently, they suffer economic and social discrimination in addition to psychological disturbances trauma, loneliness etc. Social conditioning plays a great role in their deprivation, they internalize their victimized status leading to a low self esteem. With little to no education or resources or experience of life, these sections of society, lead miserable existence, it’s time to lend voice to these marginalized communities of women and children, to that on inclusion where they are accepted in the name of their identities. These issues interconnected to the structural inequality prevalent in our culture needs to be addressed and these social norms need to be kept in mind so that we can advocate a collective change in our communities thought process.

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